Week ending November 5 1949

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John Bull

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as war leader and politician

by VIRGINIA COWLES

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EDITORIAL

Evils of the "boom" in child adoption

WE HAVE NEVER looked after our children so well as we do today. The social services and the Children Act which resulted from the Curtiss Report have helped to produce a generation of youngsters unsurpassed in health, physique and happiness.

But, as in all times of great social progress and betterment, there are a few unlucky ones who get left out, even forgotten.

In our time it is the adopted children whose benefits have not kept abreast of the general advance.

There is a boom in child adoption—but, alas, a boom also in the shady, heartless and reprehensible practice of irregular adoption arranged for private gain.

The blunt human facts are these: Many unmarried mothers have to part with their babies. More people than ever—mostly childless couples—are anxious to adopt babies. But the unofficial intermediaries who are able and willing to arrange many of these adoptions often care nothing for the welfare of any of the human beings concerned. They are interested only in their own profit.

Known cases of adoption now exceed 20,000 yearly. Last year 13,747 adoptions were arranged through magistrates' courts compared with 5,392 in 1938.

All local adoption authorities and recognized societies have long waiting lists of people anxious to adopt children. The L.C.C. says it has ten applicants for every child available.

It is estimated that 100,000 would-be adopters will have been disappointed this year, while 20,000 others will have had to wait ten months or more.

So the door is wide open to exploiters who are tempted to defy the law, either from selfishness or greed. And this traffic in unwanted children is certain to increase to meet the unprecedented demand.

In theory the Adoption of Children Bill, which recently passed through Parliament, offers a considerable measure of protection, but every social worker knows that its regulations are being flouted, and that the reforms introduced by it are insufficient.

The National Children Adoption Association, which has a quarter of a century's experience, deplores the fact that it is still possible for a mother to give, and another to accept, a child without any supervision whatever as to the welfare of that child.

The society says that individuals who know nothing of the emotional and psychological aspects of adoption may act as agents without any legal restriction except that they must notify an already overworked local welfare authority that the transaction is imminent.

What, it adds, can be ascertained about would-be foster-parents in the brief seven-day period prescribed by law? They are not even obliged to legalize an adoption or to guarantee security for the child.

That these are real and serious evils is emphasized by social workers throughout the country. And they are supported in their pleas for reform by the thirty-eight licensed adoption societies in England and Wales. Most of these, alive to the loopholes which the law allows, do their best to avoid perils and abuses by regulations of their own. Experienced officers carefully inquire as to the suitability of the new home to which a child is to be sent, while the foster-parents are provided with details of a blood test and a general health report.

Again, a probationary period is insisted upon, before the adoption is ratified, so that if the foster-parents do not keep their bargain, or the child's mother regrets it, no irreparable harm is done.

BUT the traffickers who exploit adoption for personal gain show no such concern, so long as they can get round the law which stipulates that no money must be paid. Fees, which may range from £100 to £150 are masked by fictitious accounts. An unmarried mother in a none-too-scrupulous nursing home will be given a bill for board and treatment and a big complement of "extras."

Such transactions are hard to trace and harder still to check, because a woman paying extortionate fees in her desperation to be rid of an unwanted baby is unlikely to admit the facts.

Some shady go-betweens collect from both sides. A childless wife may want to adopt a baby against her husband's wishes, counting upon winning him over later, perhaps. Or the husband may be a worthless fellow, and the wife may desire the child as a solace. No adoption society would deem such a home suitable for an adopted child, but the unscrupulous mediator is interested only in profit.

Until the regulations are effectively tightened there will always be abuses, and married couples who contemplate adoption should act only through the recognized associations or take precautions of the kind that such associations themselves apply.

But we hope the next Parliament will tackle this grave scandal with a wise and drastic new Adoption Act.

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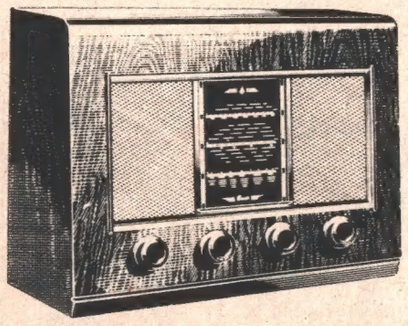

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Free Speech

WHAT GOES WRONG AT SCHOOL?

AS A FOREMAN IN A textile factory, I am amazed at the lack of education of the boys entering industry.

For example, I gave one lad instructions to cut two lengths of cloth three and a half yards long. When I measured the result, one piece was four yards and one foot and the other three yards and nine inches. That was after I had answered a query as to how many feet there were in a yard and a half.

The same lad labelled a can of castor oil as "kaster oil" and spelt "clipping" as "clipin." When I asked another boy to spell it, he wrote "kliping."

These lads were at school until they were fifteen, but I have had letters from old-timers who left school at nine whose spelling was vastly superior. — HUGH BELL, 297 Main Street, Glasgow.

Presents From Scraps

PERHAPS OTHER MOTHERS with little money will be interested in this picture of how I am solving the Christmas present problem. The dolls cost me sixpence each and are dressed with odd bits from the rag bag. The three-piece suite is made from

old matchboxes, covered with odd pieces of material and sewn together. Cushions are made from odd pieces, stuffed with cotton-wool.—MRS. M. W., Lancs.

Dodging Colds

EVERY YEAR I WAS SUBJECT to colds, but now for three winters I have escaped. How? By having a cold bath immediately on rising. I recommend it to anyone.—PREVENTION, Glamorgan.

Hills Are So Bracing

I NEVER KNEW BEFORE how healthy one could be living on a hill. Before we came here we lived in a valley. We all suffered from head colds and my young son developed a bronchial cough and asthma. We have lived on a hill for a year now and our health has improved tremendously.—MRS. D. E. WARD, 1 High Common Cottages, Little Cressingham, Watton, Norfolk.

Pity The Poor Landlord

FOUR YEARS AGO, my wife inherited a bungalow—unfortunately for us a jerry-built property erected between the wars. It is let at a prewar rent of 14s. weekly and we have been continually footing bills for new ceilings, windows, floorboards and fireplaces, as well as painting. We also got a big bill from the local council for installing adequate clothes-washing facilities.

Since we have had it, we find we have received a surplus of £2 10s. We cannot sell—for who would purchase such a property as an investment? The tenant refuses to purchase—and, as he lives cheaper this way, why should he? We cannot gain possession—although the selling price empty would be about £1,200. And we cannot increase the rent.

One reads a lot about rapacious landlords, but I think it is time we small houseowners had a little justice dealt out to us.—BAFFLED, Sussex.

Helping Hand . . .

SINCE JOINING THE R.A.F., I have done quite a bit of hitch-hiking, and I am constantly surprised by the kindness shown to those on the hitch. All sorts of people, from lorry drivers to baby car owners offer lifts and sometimes go out of their way for you. I recently hitched 342 miles from Cardiff to my home in Cumberland in eighteen hours.—A.C.2, South Wales.

. . . And Cold Shoulder

CYCLING BACK FROM WORK in pouring rain, my front wheel skidded on tramlines and I came off rather badly. My cycle fell on top of me, my shoelace got caught in a cog. Although many people were about, no one came to help me and I was left to struggle up on my own.—J. SANDERSON, 190 Langsett Road South, Oughtbridge, Sheffield.

Another View Of "Fuss"

RESENTMENT MADE ME SEETHE when I read the letter "Twins Without a Fuss" ("Free Speech," October 8). I looked forward to my second confinement with the "joy and delight" your correspondent advocates. When the doctor's services became necessary he was out on another case and three hours of agony went by before he arrived. He sought the assistance of a specialist, which meant another two hours of waiting. The specialist's care saved my life but my child was stillborn.—MRS. I. D., Glasgow.

Early Start, Early End

VISITING NORWAY, I was impressed by their working day, which is from 8-9 a.m. until 4 p.m., with a short break around noon for sandwiches and a glass of milk.

At 4 p.m. work stops, shops shut and everyone goes home to *middag*, the main meal of the day: This is over by six o'clock and the evening is still to come. Housewives do not have to cook a midday meal and half the evening is not spent serving late dinner.—NORMAN E. HILL, 18 Ilfracombe Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Pitsea, Essex.

Cruelty On The Farm?

THE SECOND COWMAN WHO wrote complaining of cruelty on the farm ("Free Speech," October 15) should have signed himself "Tenderfoot." Metal tags pressed on to calves' ears are no more painful than the piercing of girls' ears for earrings.

How does he suggest we should do castrating and de-tailing of little lambs? Has he ever witnessed the de-horning of young cattle, when their heads are securely fastened in a wooden frame and what appears to be a huge pair of hedge shears is used to snip off the horns.

If this were not done, the calves would gore and tear themselves and suffer a lot more agony than the quick operation of de-horning. Calves are very much like children. If a child needs castor oil it is our duty to see that he gets it, even if he does bellow.—ANIMAL LOVER, Dundee.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address is in the letter.

especially for

expectant mothers

For the sake of Baby, as well as for your own sake, do make sure that you are getting all the extra foods to which you are specially entitled! They have been planned as an *addition* to your ordinary rations — to give you the extra body-building and vitamin-rich foods you need at this important time.

How to get your EXTRAS

Your doctor, midwife or health visitor will give you a certificate. Take it to the Food Office, and you will receive a supplementary Grey Ration Book (RB7). Use this book to get your extra milk, meat, eggs and fruit from your usual retailers. This book also contains coupons for your Orange Juice and Cod Liver Oil or Vitamin Tablets, which you get from a distribution centre—your Food Office will tell you your nearest one. The Cod Liver Oil or Vitamin Tablets are free, the Orange Juice is 5d. a bottle (but free for those entitled to free milk).

ORANGE JUICE AND COD LIVER OIL

OR VITAMIN A & D TABLETS

These help you keep fit, increase resistance to infection and help baby to develop the foundations of good, healthy, strong bones and teeth, so take them *every day without fail*.
Thanks to Marshall Aid, a great proportion of Orange Juice is provided by the United States of America.

MILK You are entitled to an extra pint of milk a day, at 1½d. a pint (or where necessary, it is available free). This is in addition to your ordinary allowance. Take all your milk; *don't* "sacrifice" it to the family! You and Baby need milk; it is one of the finest "all-round" foods, rich in body-building material containing substances which are essential for the growth of Baby.

EGGS You are entitled to an extra egg on each allocation, and until further notice, one packet of dried egg every eight weeks, free of points.

MEAT You are entitled to a half-ration in addition to your ordinary ration. Meat is another body-building food and helps to give you the extra nourishment you need at this time.

FRUIT Whenever there is an allocation of oranges, you are entitled to an extra pound, and you are also entitled to a half-pound of bananas on every allocation. Take advantage of these pleasant extras but don't forget to take your Orange Juice.

When Baby is Born

The Grey Ration Book must be handed back to the Food Office when Baby is born, but you will get a Green Ration Book which entitles Baby to a priority allowance of milk, half the adult meat ration, the full range of other rations (except tea) and Orange Juice and Cod Liver Oil. You will be able to get Vitamin A and D Tablets for yourself for 30 weeks after Baby is born.

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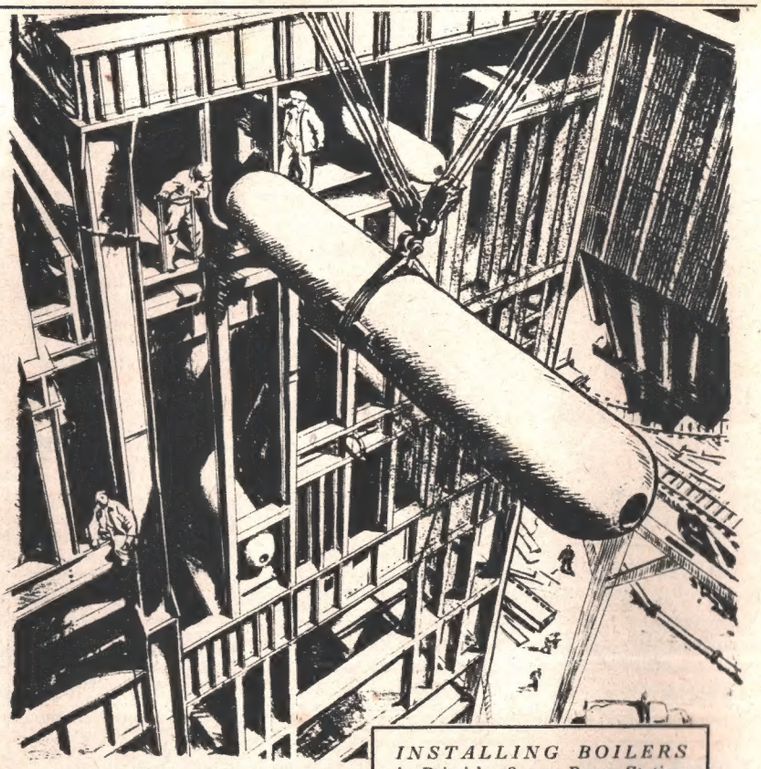

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BRITISH ELECTRICITY

"DUNLOP TYRES -they're tough like me!"

314/323

THE TWO WINSTON CHURCHILLS

by VIRGINIA COWLES

Brilliant young American-born writer, Virginia Cowles, first met Churchill at his home in 1938. During the years that followed, she made the intimate study of his personality on which this revealing analysis is based

"Today no one is more pleased than Winston that he has clung to the Tory saddle—although he is far from being the darling of the Conservative Party."—*A wartime portrait by A. R. Thomson, R.A.*

IF THE CONSERVATIVES win the coming General Election, Winston Churchill, Leader of His Majesty's Opposition, will once again become Prime Minister of England.

After the 1945 election, when Tory fortunes were at their lowest ebb and the Socialists were proclaiming joyfully that Labour was "in" for twenty years, friends pressed Winston to relinquish his leadership of the Party and merely to use the House as a platform for speeches on world affairs.

"I don't see why I should give up my horse," he said stubbornly. "It may not be a very good horse, but at least it's better than being in the infantry."

Today no one is more pleased than Winston that he has clung to the saddle. After a year or two of quiet grazing, his tired Tory beast has shown signs of revival, and the master, always buoyant and imaginative, now visualizes a successful charge through the ranks of the Government at the approaching election.

Never Know What Next

This does not mean that Winston is the darling of the Conservative Party. Far from it. Many of his colleagues are alarmed by the use he is making of his charger. Sometimes their leader is galloping off to dictate a new chapter to his book; sometimes to direct activities on his 300-acre farm in Kent; sometimes to hold a conference for the Federation of Europe. They never know when he will come cantering into the House of Commons, and when he does, they never know what he will say.

Although politics are still, as always, Churchill's major interest, he is not noted for his teamwork, and his individuality is just as pronounced in opposition as in office. Just at the moment that his party had issued a "charter" which declared that most of the existing controls must be retained as long as goods remain in short supply, Churchill cried out dramatically: "Set the people free," at once dispersing his own ranks in confusion.

Although as a young man Churchill deserted the Conservative Party for the Liberals, flaunting his radicalism in the face of his former colleagues, Sir Ian Hamilton, a close friend, said of him: "I have always felt that Winston's coat of many colours was originally dipped in a vat of blue; a good fast natural Tory background, none of your synthetic dyes."

Embarrassed Supporters

This observation seems to have been astute, for today Winston represents the extreme Right of the Tory Party. His Conservatism, which in former days would have been only too welcome, is at present proving an embarrassment to many of his supporters. They believe that the Conservative Party has little chance of defeating Labour, unless it can convince the electorate that it has abandoned its *laissez-faire* economy. The Conservatives, therefore, are divided into two groups: the progressives led by Eden and R. A. Butler, and the diehards led by Churchill.

The fact that members of his Party would like to see him relinquish his leadership to

Churchill in his study at Chartwell, where Virginia Cowles talked to him before the war. "You were aware only a quarter of his resources were being used"

Anthony Eden has not escaped Winston's notice. He recently remarked to a friend: "When I want to tease Anthony, I remind him that Gladstone formed his last administration at the age of eighty-four."

Whoever undertakes Churchill's biography will have to be a writer of unusual perception, for there are few men in public life as incalculable and none as contradictory. Aristocrat, autocrat and democrat, he is a blend of folly and wisdom, of sentiment and arrogance, of impulsiveness and detachment. He is capable of playing the politician as well as the statesman, and sometimes veers between these two rôles with bewildering facility. The one constant note in his character is individuality.

His Early Flair

As a child he was regarded by his teachers not only as "the naughtiest small boy in the world," but as a dunce as well. He entered Harrow at the bottom of his class and left, six years later, still in the Lower School. The only flair he showed was for journalism, but as his contributions to the school paper consisted mainly of attacks on the masters, they were not greatly appreciated. These published lampoons, innocently signed "Junius Junior," led to his being called up before the headmaster, Samuel Weldom, and asked for an explanation. "But they're anonymous, sir," he replied. "Anonymous or not," snapped Weldom, "if any more appear I'm going to beat *you*." Winston describes his schooldays as "the only barren and unhappy period" of his life.

I first met Winston Churchill in 1938, six months before the Munich agreement. He was not then a member of the Government, but even outside it he was still the most colourful and controversial figure in English political life.

I had sat in the gallery of the House of Commons and watched the Chamber crowd to hear him speak. In the distance he looked extraordinarily old-fashioned in his black coat, his winged collar and bow tie, and even his rolling prose suggested a more leisurely and cultivated century. But what he had to say was not of the past; when he leaned forward to warn his colleagues of the dangers of Nazi Germany he became the incarnation of a pugnacious John Bull. You felt the imagination of the House stir with the brilliance of his words. But unfortunately the magic ended with his eloquence. When you went into the tearoom half an hour later you heard people chattering about what he had said with an alarming lightheartedness.

Churchill spent most of his time at his country house, Chartwell, in Kent, and one Sunday his son took me there for lunch. I remember being surprised by his round pink face. I had not expected such a formidable man to have such a cherubic appearance.

Later, I heard that a woman had once told him that her baby looked like him, to which he replied firmly: "All babies look like me." I was also surprised by the fact that in private conversation his phrases were as rounded and polished as when he was speaking in the House. He delighted in the use of such Victorian expressions as "I rejoice," "I am greatly distressed" and "I venture to say," which were emphasized by the impediment in his speech that prevented him from pronouncing distinctly the letter "s."

During lunch the conversation centred on world affairs, and he expressed his fear that England would refuse to show her hand not only until it was too late to avoid war, but until it was too late to win a war. He talked with the brilliance I had expected, but I later learned that I had been lucky, for when he is preoccupied or moody he makes no attempt at conversation. Small talk does not interest him and he is incapable of repartee; it is either a question of silence or a monologue, and nothing in between.

After lunch I was taken upstairs to see his large, high-ceilinged, oak-beamed study. He showed me several stacks of manuscript of the history of the English-speaking people which he was then writing. "I doubt that I'll finish it before the war comes," he said morosely, "and if I do, the part the English-speaking people will play will be so decisive I will have to add several new volumes." He paused. "And if it is not decisive, no more histories will be written for many years."

As Churchill talked one could not help but be struck by the restless energy and frustration of the man. In spite of his writing, his weekly contributions to the Press, his long and masterly speeches in the Commons, you were aware that only a quarter of his resources were being used; you felt that he was like a mighty torrent trying to burst its dams. At that time he had been out of office for nine years. "A genius without judgment" was the phrase you heard most often in connection with him. "The trouble with Winston," people said, "is that you never know what he will do next."

Wasn't Popular

Today it is commonly believed that his exile was due to his anti-Nazism. This is not altogether true. He was excluded from Ramsay MacDonald's National Government in 1931, two years before Hitler came to power. And in 1935, when there was talk of his joining Baldwin's Conservative Government, he suddenly backed the cause of Edward VIII and Mrs. Simpson, arousing such a storm of disapproval that his chances of restoring himself to favour were again eclipsed.

The truth of the matter is that Churchill was not a popular figure. His arrogance and aggressiveness provoked hostility. He wounded sensibilities without even knowing he had done so, for ideas, not people, were the only thing that interested him. Tactless and impetuous, he had not learned the virtue of at least giving the appearance of co-operation; as a result he was branded as "a troublemaker." When Bonar Law became Prime Minister in 1922, he said: "I consider Churchill a formidable antagonist. Nevertheless, I would rather have him in opposition than on my side."

Much of this prejudice was based on Churchill's past. His political career had been anything but orthodox. After having sat as a Conservative M.P. for six years he crossed the floor of the House in 1906 and joined the Liberals, an act which caused a sensation. Under various Liberal administrations he held the ministerial posts of President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary, First Lord of the Admiralty, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Minister of Munitions, Secretary of State for War and for Air, and Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Rebel Was Rewarded

Then, in 1922, he crossed the floor of the House again and returned to the Conservatives. It is a tribute to his talents that he was rewarded with the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer: Party loyalty is taken seriously in England, and rebels are not often forgiven. Once, when Churchill was referring to his past, he said, with a twinkle in his eye: "Anyone can rat, but it takes a certain amount of ingenuity to re-rat."

However, he was distrusted by many people and frequently referred to as "an opportunist.". Added to this, the working classes had not forgotten that when he was Home Secretary he had called out troops to break industrial strikes; they also blamed much of the unemployment of the same period on the fact that as Chancellor of the Exchequer he had

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VIRGINIA COWLES has close personal knowledge of Churchill, and this article—published for the first time exclusively in John Bull—is an important chapter in her forthcoming American book, *No Cause for Alarm*, a penetrating study of our politics and politicians. The British edition of the book will appear under the title, *King, Country and Socialism* (Hamish Hamilton).

Author, war correspondent and playwright, Miss Cowles, who is 37, has lived in Europe for the past thirteen years. She is married to Aidan Crawley, M.P. for Buckingham.

been responsible for England's return to the gold standard.

Thus, in the decade preceding the second World War, Churchill found himself with bitter opponents among Conservative, Liberal and Labour leaders alike. What was so disarming about him was the fact that he never got used to unpopularity; it always surprised him. Once he wrote mournfully: "I have never joined an intrigue. Everything I have got I have fought for. And yet I have been more hated than anybody."

During this unhappy period in Churchill's life, his chief solace lay in writing. He has always enjoyed hard work and is capable of turning out an immense amount of material in an astonishingly short time. But his literary achievements, distinguished as they were, always seemed to him secondary to political success. World affairs were the only topic of conversation that never bored him.

Brandy And Cigars

Churchill's reputation for luxury always seemed to me greatly exaggerated. Comfort was essential to him, but he cared nothing for society. He insisted on a good bed, good food, good wine and brandy and good cigars. Occasionally he dined out, but he seldom spent a weekend away from his own home circle, where things were ordered to his taste.

Any deviation from comfort, arranged in the name of pleasure, filled him with gloom. For example, Megan Lloyd George tells the story of a time, many years ago, when her father and Winston went on a trip to North Africa. A prominent prince of the desert gave a large dinner in their honour. The feast was served in the open, and the guests sat in a circle on the ground around a huge cauldron of steaming food. There were no forks or knives, and everyone was expected to help himself from the common bowl.

Lloyd George enjoyed the unusual, and at once flung himself into the spirit of the occasion. But Winston sat silent and glowering, refusing to make a move of any kind. Some of the guests eyed him nervously for fear their host would take offence at his sullen mood. Suddenly, he rolled up his sleeves and with a fierce defiance plunged his arm into the bowl, growling: "To hell with civilization!"

Winston was every inch a Prime Minister. Occasionally I had the honour of being invited to 10 Downing Street for lunch. A low-ceilinged room below the ground floor which, I believe, was once the servants' hall, had been turned into the dining-room, and there were seldom more than seven or eight guests. Winston usually came into the room in a blue siren suit, looking remarkably like a teddy bear, but with an air as autocratic as a monarch. I used to watch the guests struggling between surprise at his comic appearance and awe at his dignity.

The success of the lunch depended entirely on what sort of mood he was in; sometimes he ate in such sullen silence that your heart sank, as you imagined that the war had taken some grave turn for the worse; at other times he was buoyantly talkative, and held the table with a brilliant monologue.

Winston had at last found his destiny, and the whole of 10 Downing Street throbbed with an energy it had never known before. Churchill stayed in bed half the morning dictating, and stayed up half the night talking. Every afternoon, after lunch, he had a nap.

Chiefs of staff, civil servants, Ministers had to adapt themselves to this routine as best they could. Most of them had to be at work at nine or ten in the morning; even so, woe betide them if they were not men enough to come when he sent for them after dinner, to stay up until the early hours of the morning. The only man who stuck to his guns and always bade Churchill good night at 11 p.m. was Field Marshal Alexander.

Weekends, too, became a novelty. During the blitz, Chequers, the Prime Minister's official country residence, was regarded as too obvious a target for the German bombers, and Churchill was persuaded to abandon it. He accepted the offer of Ronald Tree to spend his weekends at Ditchley, one of the most beautiful houses in England.

Every Friday, Churchill and an entourage of ten or twenty guests, secretaries, civil servants, generals, Ministers and distinguished foreign emissaries, moved to Oxfordshire. The Trees kept only a few rooms for themselves and turned the rest of the house over to the Prime Minister. In these luxurious surroundings, many plans for the war were laid.

The main relaxation of the weekend was the showing of a film every Sunday after dinner. Churchill watches a film with schoolboy enthusiasm; he enjoyed *Lady Hamilton* so much that he insisted on seeing it eight times. Churchill, however, was not always left in peace to see his films. Frequently he was interrupted by urgent messages. The news that Hess had landed in England is said to have arrived during the showing of a Marx Brothers film.

No one denies that Churchill was a great war leader, but the charge must often be levelled against him that he *enjoyed* fighting the war. I do not see how anyone can pretend otherwise. From youth his imagination had been stirred by the great battles that had decided the history of Europe, by the relentless struggle for power between men of different nations and different creeds. Churchill was a fighter, and the stakes were high; for the first time in his life he had the opportunity to employ all his energy in a cause in which he personally believed.

Message Before Lunch

But anyone who imagines that he carried the burden lightly is mistaken; there were times when the weight was almost crushing. In the autumn of 1940 I motored to Chequers one day for lunch. Mrs. Churchill was away, and only his daughter Mary and daughter-in-law Pamela were there.

Just before lunch was announced, one of Churchill's private secretaries came into the room and handed him a message from the Foreign Office. He read it standing before the chimney-piece in the drawing-room. Then, unexpectedly, he handed it to me. The message was a report from Berlin stating that Pétain had agreed to turn over to the Germans the use of all aerodromes and ports in unoccupied France.

Churchill was plunged into a state of gloom. He came into the dining-room, but ate very little, and sat halfway through the meal with his elbows on the table holding his head in his hands. The secretary who had brought the news reminded him that it was only a report from Berlin and likely to be untrue, but the old man would not be consoled. "If it is true, it's a bitter blow," he said.

At last, lunch mercifully ended, and Churchill went out for a walk. I left at about four o'clock, and before I went he came back to the drawing-room as vigorous and lion-hearted as ever. He had received a message that the report was false.

A few months later I went again to Chequers, this time to be the godmother of Randolph Churchill's son, Winston, jr. The christening took place in a small chapel about a mile from the house.

Because of a breakdown in my car, I did not arrive until the ceremony had begun. I found a place reserved for me between Mr. Churchill and his son. I had always heard that the Prime Minister's emotions were easily stirred, and that at times he could be as sentimental as a woman; and on this occasion I had proof of it, for he sat through the ceremony with tears streaming down his cheeks. "Poor infant," he murmured, "to be born into such a world as this."

After the christening we returned to Chequers for lunch. Only the family, Lord Rothermere and the two godfathers, Lord Beaverbrook and Brendan Bracken, were present. Beaverbrook rose and proposed a toast to the baby, then turned to Churchill, whose birthday had occurred the day before, and proposed a toast to him. Beaverbrook was eloquent; he reminded us that we had the honour to be in the presence of a man who would be remembered as long as the civilized world existed.

Once again I looked up to see Churchill weeping. When he was called on to reply, he rose, and in a voice unsteady with emotion, said: "In these days I often think of our Lord." Then he sat down.

I have never forgotten those simple words, and if he enjoyed waging the war, let it always be remembered that he understood the anguish of it as well.

It would have taken a man of far greater detachment than Winston to have refused to offer himself to the electorate in 1945, when all the world was acclaiming him. Although leading Conservatives were uncomfortably aware that a new wind was blowing through England, they believed that Churchill's fame could keep them in power. Churchill believed this, too. Like most great men, he lived in an atmosphere of adulation and flattery, and had little contact with the rank and file of the population.

He was supremely self-confident. Although from time to time he was pressed to make some positive statement on domestic policy, he was not interested in internal affairs.

It was perhaps typical of the arrogance which had led Churchill to political disaster so often before that he should think he could win an election on personality alone. "His tragedy," an opponent remarked, "is that although the public will sometimes follow his ideas, they will never follow *him*." While the Socialists went into action with a carefully planned programme, Conservatives fought the battle equipped with little more than Churchill's photograph.

The campaign was an astonishing revelation of Churchill's dual character. Overnight, the statesman vanished and in his place appeared an excited and irresponsible politician, hurling invective and abuse at his opponents, and offering nothing constructive of his own. Churchill sounded the note in a radio broadcast telling the country that Socialism would mean a "Nazi state" and "a Gestapo."

I heard this broadcast at Lord Rothermere's house, and remember the silence when he had finished. "If he continues like that," said Lord Rothermere, "the election is as good as lost."

Not Playing Fair

People were shocked, because Churchill had paid many tributes to Attlee, Morrison, Bevin and other Socialist leaders, when they were serving in his Coalition Government; to turn on them wildly now in order to cadge votes was considered "un-English." Some

Continued on page 30

THE WAR LEADER, 1942: "For the first time in his life he had the chance to employ all his energy in a cause he believed in"

THE VOTE-CATCHER, 1945: "It was perhaps typical of him that he should think he could win an election on personality alone"

Why our pin-ups fall down

by MURIEL SEGAL

Our models may be wonderful girls, but our girls aren't always wonderful models. And it's no trivial handicap

In Paris, glamour-conscious models Tania and Patricia show the way

FOR TEN YEARS NOW, I have been trying to supply a hungry, world-wide demand for British glamour photographs which can compete with the luscious and eye-catching American pin-ups. It has been a losing battle and I am almost ready to admit defeat.

It may not seem so on the surface, but pin-ups *can* be important. They can help our export drive. They can sell our films, our woollens, our styles, our manufactured goods. And they can bring us goodwill.

Our film stills, for instance, are supposed to sell British-made motion pictures and publicise British stars to the newspaper- and magazine-reading public of America, Canada and the rest of the world. But do they?

I met an editor of the largest group of Australian periodicals in London not long ago. "We would much prefer to illustrate our magazines with the British products," he said. "We simply can't. They don't compare with the Hollywood handouts."

When, some time ago, I undertook to prepare an important lingerie catalogue for the export trade, I could not turn out the job I knew was needed. The photographic models I was able to get were just not good enough.

During my long struggle to find out what was wrong with our pin-ups, I brought top-ranking Hollywood still photographers to London to prove that it was not the man behind the camera that made us miss.

Critics Into Husbands

Looking around with critical eyes, these men said the girls who modelled for them were "mighty sweet kids." Some married them.

"Your models," so went the final verdict, "are wonderful girls, but your girls aren't wonderful models."

One crack photographer, now back in California with his English wife, says his great problem with models over here was that they wouldn't "give." He was referring, obliquely, to the statement made some years ago by Hurrell, the originator of pin-up photography. "A model," said Hurrell, "must *feel* desirable."

"A British model," said the photographer, "thinks feeling desirable must be somehow improper. As a result, her swim suit doesn't fit in the right places. She has no 'sweater appeal.' Her undies are seldom cut right and bulge instead of helping to produce the required sleek curves.

"The American model, however, knows how to look provocative and respectable, too. She knows she must exaggerate her allure.

"Subtle scents and a cooing voice, valuable sex-appeal assets in life, are lost in a still. They must be replaced by that elusive photogenic charm of the successful cover girl."

To get results like that over here, we must be prepared to spend time—and money. British film studios, for example, should consider first-class still cameramen as important as the cast. They should be paid accordingly.

In America, starlets do practically nothing for the first year or two of their contracts except pose for publicity pictures. Jane Russell was well known to Americans long before they saw her first film. And Hollywood also employs what are known as "stock" models—who never expect to appear in a film but are paid to pose for glamour pictures.

Wastage is, of course, enormous. One of the big-name pin-up producers admits he has literally hundreds of rejects for every photograph that clicks. No error is too slight to cause an otherwise perfect photo to wind up in the waste-paper basket. Meanwhile, our British photographer, carefully nursing his stock of film and flash-bulbs, tries to get away with three or four trial shots.

Girl At The Top

The number one British model this year is undoubtedly Barbara Goalen, who crashed Paris as a mannequin for the fabulous Christian Dior, originator of the New Look. She is elegant, but, according to such judges as Earl Wilson, the American columnist, probably too slender.

Wilson recently said the British girl is so skinny that when her boy friend walks out with his arm around her waist he looks as though he's gripping his umbrella. Later, when he returned to America, he decided he had been too hasty in his judgment.

Of others among the top dozen or so British models, several are socialites. Cynthia Monteith left modelling some time ago to get married, although others like Pamela Minchin carry on and are in great demand. But Zoltan Glass, a well-known London fashion and glamour photographer, says he has to choose between the well-bred model, who has been conditioned from birth to conceal her feelings and charm, and the girl who has nothing to conceal.

The American and French girl is proud of a pretty figure, and she knows that in fashion shots—as in pin-ups—the model has to feel glamour-conscious. The clothes can't look alluring and feminine if the wearer doesn't do her part as well.

"It's a pity," says Lucie Clayton, who runs her own model agency, "that the British model gets little personal publicity."

Most girls get about thirty shillings an hour for the job. American models are paid four times as much and the client invariably supplies hair-dos and manicures and, usually, accessories.

Even Their Undies

If a transatlantic model comes from a well-known agency she has a complete wardrobe expertly cut and designed with an eye to photogenic quality. Even undies are made to measure and swim suits and sweaters have built-in "gay deceivers."

The British pin-up consumer doesn't demand that kind of preliminary perfection. It follows that the result is inferior. It isn't all the fault of the model herself.

One model, bewailing the expense of keeping up appearances for the hard eye of the camera, sighed:

"If only the Health Service would provide free perms, it would certainly help! Maybe we'll never look as snazzy as the French, American and Swedish glamour girls—but we should at least be encouraged to try!"

Music for two

By the time they reached "half crazy" he was the only one singing. And Alice, he noticed, was in the seat beside him

by L. S. HOWARTH

ILLUSTRATED BY NARRAWAY

Tommy Briggs's arias got wild applause all over the world. They left Alice Wrigley cold

UP IN BROMFORD, they say that their Municipal Symphony Orchestra is the finest in all the provinces, and it's only modesty that stops them from including London as well. They've heard of the Hallé, of course, and the Liverpool Philharmonic, and they believe there's a big band of some sort in Birmingham, but they still stick to it that little Bromford can beat the lot. And serious!

There isn't a more serious body of serious musicians anywhere, and when they are obliged to play anything so popular as the "Valse des Fleurs" or Chopin's Polonaise, they do it with a superior smile on their faces as if they were just amusing the children. And all this makes it all the more remarkable that there was one occasion when they actually played—of all pieces—"Daisy Bell"!

Yes. "Daisy Bell." Right through. Twice. And, which makes it all the more astounding, Tommy Briggs was at the back of it.

It's necessary to go back a little way to Tommy's schooldays, if the story is to be explained properly. Now, at school Tommy wasn't promising. He didn't even give any promise that he might be promising later. His writing was slow and awkward and he seemed to have no head for sums at all.

"It's not that the lad's backward," the headmaster explained to his parents once, "but he just isn't quite as far forward as I'd like him to be."

His mother was worried. "I don't know what we're going to do with him," she said to his father. "Why, when he grows up he's going to be no better than you!"

And his father, who feared she was right, shook his head and got on with winning a fortune in a football pool, so that his son could be a gentleman and brains wouldn't matter.

But when Tommy was eight, somebody found out that he was musical. There is some doubt about the origin of this discovery. The headmaster says he noticed it at school; the vicar said that he had remarked it in church; and his mother claimed to have suspected it all along from the way he always had his head stuck in the loudspeaker when he ought to have been out getting into a bit of healthy mischief with the other lads. But however the discovery was made, his father said that Tommy would have to have music lessons.

"More expense," his mother said.

"It might be an investment," Mr. Briggs argued. "He might be able to earn a fair living with music."

"Nay!" said his mother. "Never! He'll have to work as well!"

"I've known chaps at t' club," Mr. Briggs pointed out, "get as much as two or three guineas for just singing on a Saturday night."

"Well, if you think your wages'll run to it. . . ."

"I wouldn't say they'd exactly run," Mr. Briggs said thoughtfully, "but they'll get there if they've got to go on crutches!"

So Tommy had his music lessons and joined the St. John's Church choir, and everybody reported very favourably on his progress. The first reward Mr. Briggs had for his faith was when Tommy walked away with two first prizes at the local music festival and the adjudicator said he was the most promising youngster he'd heard for years.

After that there was no holding Tommy back, and before long he won a singing scholarship and was sent off to a college of music.

HE was nineteen when he finished there, and now that his voice had settled itself and been properly trained he was a very sweet, true tenor.

"Well," his father said when he came home after his last term, "you've finished school at last. You can sing. What are you going to do for a living?"

"That's all settled," Tommy said. "I'm going into opera."

"Opera," said his mother, whose tastes were very decided. "Who on earth wants to listen to that?"

"A lot of people," Tommy said. "I've got a regular job with a permanent company. Of course, I'm only learning yet, but later I should do very well. It's a fine chance."

He imparted the same news to Alice Wrigley, but in a rather less cocksure sort of way. Tommy had been at school with Alice and she'd been in the St. John's choir with him, but he'd never got over feeling shy with her.

"It might be a bit before I see you again, Alice," he said, "but I'd like you to know I shall always be thinking about you."

"You'd do better to think about your job," Alice suggested, "and then you might get on."

"I shall be working hard enough. I'm very fond of you, you know, Alice."

"That's very kind of you, I'm sure," she said.

"Do you—think much about me, Alice?"

"I've a lot of things to occupy my mind," Alice said. "You're all right, I suppose, but if you really want to know, I'd never think of getting soppy over you."

Tommy tried not to look disappointed. "All the same," he said, "I'd like you—not to get married or anything until I come back."

"Oh? I'm promising nothing of the

" Of course, you know, Guy Fawkes' Day as an institution is pretty well dead now . . . "

sort, and don't you build up on it," Alice said. " Anyway, my mum wouldn't let me have you. She's all for a chap with a steady job. Nothing chancy like music. She'd like me to have Jack Yates in the Co-op office."

" Him!" Tommy said.

" And what's wrong with Jack Yates?" Alice asked dangerously.

So Tommy Briggs took his cracked heart off to London to join the opera company. He kept his promise and worked hard, and although he only had small parts at first, he got on very nicely. His voice, developing with practice and experience, was too good to be kept in the background, and his parts grew bigger and the Press notices began to speak of him as a coming star.

All this time he wrote home regularly to his father, and whether he was in London or Rome or Paris or even New York, he never failed to take an interest in what was going on at home. And somewhere in nearly every letter he managed to ask somehow about Alice Wrigley. The news was always reassuring, and Tommy was pleased to see in a copy of the *Bromford Times*, which was sent to him wherever he was, that Jack Yates had got himself safely married to a hairdresser's assistant.

It was three years before Tommy got a real chance to come home for a holiday. His old friends made a great fuss of him, for by now he was well known on the radio, he made gramophone records, and the opera company he had once been proud to belong to was equally proud of Tommy.

He arrived in a smart new car, and brought extravagant gifts. His father was delighted to see him, and his mother was compelled to admit grudgingly that singing didn't seem at all a bad job. But Tommy, after the shortest decent interval, made for Alice Wrigley's house.

The Wrigleys greeted him effusively and, guessing why he had come, they discreetly contrived to leave him alone in the front parlour with Alice.

Tommy said: " I just thought I'd like to tell you, Alice, that you've been all over the world with me." It was a conceit which he had been thinking about for some time.

But it was wasted on Alice.

" Don't be soft," she sniffed and Tommy wondered that God should have made so sweet a rose with such prickly thorns. " I've heard you make quite a nice going-on with your singing now?"

" A hundred or two a week sometimes," Tommy told her with pride.

Alice looked unimpressed. " It's awful," she said. "Just compare it with what chaps get for really working! It's sinful!"

" I—I suppose it is," Tommy agreed uncomfortably. He hadn't imagined the interview going like this at all. In stories it all happened quite differently: by all the rules Alice ought by now to have been busy deciding whether to have the wedding in May or June. He tried another approach. " Have you heard any of my things?" he asked as casually as possible.

" I don't go in for opera and that," Alice said dampingly. " I like something with a tune in it we can listen to while mum's ironing and dad's doing his competitions. Or else hymns, of course."

" I suppose it's a matter of taste," Tommy said. " You know, Alice—you're looking prettier than ever."

" Am I? And you've parted your hair different. It used to be all over your face. You seem more of a man, like."

Alice sounded so nearly approving that Tommy was tempted to press forward. " You didn't wait for me on purpose, did you? " he asked.

" Of course not. I was just hard to please; and there's no reason to suppose you'd please me any better than several I've chalked off before. And if you think your bit of money makes any difference," she concluded vehemently, " you can think again."

So Tommy gave it up and went back to to his father, who took him to the Red Lion for a drink. Here Tommy found plenty of old friends who were willing to pay proper respect to an international celebrity. But their praises seemed a little empty. The only good opinion in Bromford that Tommy wanted was Alice Wrigley's.

" It's t' choir trip tomorrow," one of them said. " We're all going in a chara to Southport. What about coming with us, lad, just for old times' sake? "

" Ay, come on, lad," several other voices joined in.

" Well," said Tommy, " thanks very much. I'd be very pleased to." He wouldn't be pleased, really, he knew that; choir trips weren't his cup of tea at all. Unfortunately, though, he couldn't at the time think of any convincing reason for refusing without seeming standoffish.

It was, they all told him, a good choir trip, but Tommy couldn't find much to enthuse about in it. He had to get up far too soon for one thing, and for another he didn't like the steak-and-kidney pie they all had for lunch. But he could have put up with that; what really worried him was the behaviour of Alice.

Being in the choir herself, naturally she was there, but as far as Tommy was concerned, he thought quite peevishly, she might just as well have never left home. She attached herself firmly to two of the other women members of the choir, sat with one of them in the coach and remained all day in their company. On the beach, on the promenade, on the fun fair, even on the little railway that runs to the end of the pier, Alice seemed to be almost defying Tommy's efforts to come within speaking distance of her and, certainly, he never had any chance of catching her alone.

He was glad when the day was over, when the high-spirited supper of fish-and-chips was eaten and everyone was packed into the coach on the way home.

Tommy, sitting by himself on a seat near the back, glowered despondently round him at the hilarious gaiety of the choristers. He reflected, gloomily, that although he had won fame, he had lost the ability to enjoy himself.

By the time the coach had rumbled through Preston he was so deep in a comfortable self-pity that he was almost relishing it, and he hardly noticed that the other occupants of the coach had begun desultorily to sing snatches of popular songs.

But as the snowball of noise grew, it became too much to ignore, and he heard Dick Holgate, the butcher, call out: " Come on, let's have some of the old ones! What about ' Nellie Dean '? "

And the choir, since it was Saturday night instead of Sunday, sang " Nellie Dean " and " Clementine " and " Ilkley Moor " and " Lily of Laguna," and Tommy began to feel strangely stirred by the heavy surge of the old familiar sentiment. He feared that they would think him a wet-blanket for not joining in, and when Dick Holgate started the first bars of " Daisy Bell " he began, tentatively, for he was not quite sure of the words, to sing with the rest of the party.

" We'll have that again," Dick called. " It's the best o' t' lot! "

This time, Tommy, sure of the words, sang out loud, and by the time they had reached " half-crazy " he was the only one singing. Everyone else had stopped to listen and there was a burst of applause when he had finished. Then he noticed that Alice Wrigley had slipped into the vacant seat beside him.

" It was grand, Tommy," she said. " I'd no idea you'd such a lovely voice! Why didn't you tell me you could sing songs like that as well as stuffy old opera? "

And this is where the Bromford Municipal Symphony Orchestra, after a long and silent wait, comes into the story at last. For the next day they had arranged a special Sunday afternoon concert at which Tommy Briggs was going to sing.

He sang very well, too, although very few people who were there could say with certainty just what were the operatic pieces he sang. But when he came to the encore, he looked down to where Alice Wrigley was sitting in her complimentary seat, quite clearly winked at her, and then spoke to the conductor, who looked very surprised.

And then slowly, hesitantly, very quietly, as though they were rather ashamed to be caught at it, the Bromford Municipal Symphony Orchestra began to play " Daisy Bell."

And clear above the orchestra the magnificent voice of Tommy Briggs rang out as resonantly and as beautifully as if he had been singing the most elegant of Italian arias at a Royal Command performance at Covent Garden Opera House.

NOW YOU KNOW

SHOULD YOU MAKE A WILL? Well, if you don't, all your chattels (furniture, clothing, jewels) will go to your wife (or husband). So will the first £1,000 you leave. The rest goes to your next of kin.

In order of precedence next of kin are: (1) wife or husband; (2) children; (3) father and mother; (4) brothers and sisters; (5) half brothers and sisters; (6) nephews and nieces; (7) grandparents; (8) uncles and aunts.

You can make a will on any piece of paper or on a 7½d. will form bought at a stationer's. You must sign it in the presence of two witnesses and also appoint executors.

Unless you are careful, your will may not say what you mean. For example, if you write: " I leave all my money to Bill Smith," the result may be that Bill Smith will get only your loose change.

The best way is to consult a lawyer.

JOHN BULL November 5 1949

KING RAT HAS A WONDERFUL YEAR

by LAWRENCE EARL

Wisecracking Ted Ray's rise to the top of the variety bill has been sudden, spectacular. What got him there?

FOR TWENTY LONG and lean years Ted Ray, an amiably effervescent variety comedian with a rapid-fire delivery and an apparently endless store of new and second-hand gags, had been trying with only lukewarm success to win the heart of the theatre-going public. Then, last November, came an indication that he was close to the top. He was chosen to appear in the Royal Command Variety Performance at the Palladium.

Ray was properly appreciative. He walked on to the great stage, inwardly nervous but outwardly as confident as the bantam cock he somehow manages to resemble.

While the King and Queen and a glittering audience critically awaited his first words, he cast his bright blue eyes over the house. Ray believes in the effect of proper timing.

"What a business," he said at last. "I work in variety all my life and where do I end up?" (Another pause.) "Doing a one-night stand!"

The sophisticated audience roared—and Ray was *in*. For him, this was only the exciting beginning of a remarkable year, which will culminate this weekend when he appears again at the Royal Command Performance—this time at the Coliseum.

Won The Title

That same month he was elected King Rat of the Grand Order of Water Rats, the variety artists' exclusive brotherhood, a title which means he has won the highest esteem of his colleagues, both as a stage craftsman and as an individual.

The truth is that, what with one good thing happening to him and then another, the past twelvemonth has been heaven on earth for the Irish-looking little Lancashire comic who had tried so hard for so long to be a headliner that he is still a little breathless over the sudden fury of his success.

Last spring, for example, the B.B.C. offered him his own radio show, *Ray's A Laugh*. It now boasts 5,000,000 listeners. Only the other week Ray was also appointed master of ceremonies on *Music Hall*, where he made his radio début years ago, thus becoming the first comedian to take charge of this hardy old B.B.C. perennial.

At the same time, he plays two shows nightly in Tom Arnold's *Ice Vogues* at London's Stoll Theatre which, he believes, entitles him to claim another record—that of being the first comic relief in an ice show who not only does not, but *can*not, skate at all. When he has to appear on the frozen surface at the Stoll he wears a pair of patent leather oxfords made especially for him by Gamba, the theatrical bootmaker, with spiked soles to keep him from falling and creating unintentional comedy.

£25,000 A Year

During the past summer, his timetable was further complicated by a run in variety at the Palladium. Friends often wonder how he manages to cram all his activities into the rigid ration of twenty-four hours each day and calculate that, with it all, he must now be earning at the pleasing rate of £25,000 a year or more.

In spite of his plural professional commitments, Ray likes to live a reasonably quiet family life with his wife, Sybil, and two sons (Robin, fifteen, and Andrew, ten) in the unpretentious house he owns in North London. He keeps one day a week—Wednesday—clear for playing his favourite game of golf with old friends.

In a year which has given him recognition, prestige and financial returns far beyond the reach of most men, the moment he remembers most vividly for thrills is the one in which he scored his first hole-in-one at the 167-yard thirteenth at Crews Hill.

He has a handicap of nine, which makes him a better-than-average club golfer, and likes to play with fellow comic Sid Field. Ray takes his golf seriously. Until recently he had an annoying loop at the top of his backswing which was caused by the careless lifting of his right elbow.

His Sore Spot

The loop was so pronounced that on one occasion he was playing at Crews Hill when comedian George Doonan passed on the next fairway and shouted: "I'm fine. How are you?"

Ted hadn't said a word. Later, in the clubhouse, he demanded to know from Doonan what all the fuss had been about.

"Why," Doonan said innocently, but well aware of Ray's sore spot, "as I was passing you waved at me with your club when it was at the top of your backswing. I was only returning the courtesy."

Fortunately, both for his game and his temper, this kind of thing no longer bothers Ted. "I'm pretty sure," he says with pardonable smugness, "that I've got that loop cured now."

In Grand Order regalia, Ted Ray (right) laughs at someone else's joke

While it is true that his Royal Command appearance was his first real step into stardom, Ted owes a great deal to the popularity of his radio comedy show.

It was heard, on trial only, for the first time on April 4 this year. It was not a sensational success, but George Inns, who produces it, decided it was worth carrying on.

"The comedy in it was poor," producer Inns admits, "and there was no thread for week-to-week continuity. After a few programmes we decided to wipe it out and instead have Ted play the part of a new character, George, the average man—with a conscience.

"We wanted plenty of opportunity to get George into various situations and to maintain a feeling of continuity, so we decided he would work on a newspaper. The aim was to create a little Charlie Chaplin type of average man."

At this point, Inns pauses, looks deeply into space and shakes his head. "In spite of everything, George is developing into Ted Ray, who isn't an average man at all." He says this, not as a criticism, for Ray is his favourite comedian, but rather in the kind of gentle surprise that indicates his ugly duckling has unexpectedly become a swan.

The show is written by Ray himself and Eddie McGuire, another Lancashire lad who specializes in creating situations. Ted is the gag man of the team. "The main thing," McGuire says, "is to get a basic situation that will carry the skit, then dress it up with gags."

Building up each weekly programme takes a lot of work. On Monday mornings at ten o'clock, Inns, McGuire and Ray meet at the producer's office in Æolian Hall, New Bond Street, for a conference on next week's show.

Ideas Are Pooled

The three keep throwing in suggestions, tossing them out or adding to them, with rapid-fire comments that sound almost like one man talking out loud. It goes something like this:

Ray: "How about sending George down to the seashore to judge a beauty contest?"

McGuire: "Why not? He could meet the mayor. . . ."

Ray: ". . . who could own all the stores. Get it? The beauties have to buy all their bathing costumes and suntan lotion from him."

Inns: "Wait! The mayor's got his own wife entered in the competition and is very anxious for her to win." They go on developing the plot.

After this skirmishing, McGuire goes off and writes a skeleton script. On Tuesday, next week's show is forgotten while the current one has its final rehearsals and, at nine thirty that evening, is performed live over the Home

Service. There is, of course, a Sunday repeat on the Light and three overseas broadcasts which beam to Australia, the Middle East and South Africa.

On Wednesday, Ray plays his beloved golf, but on Thursday the three reconvene in Inns's office to pull the script apart and put it together again. McGuire takes it away with him once more and polishes it up.

There are, Inns calculates, at least seventy laughs sprinkled through every script. "The show has now got into its rhythm," he says. "The idea is to put out a family programme—an armchair show that doesn't shout at you.

"Ted's got a nice, friendly voice. He's a real human being and he manages to project that into the home. He gets 200 letters a week that tell him so."

At the age of twelve, when Ray lived with his parents in Liverpool, he decided he wanted to play the violin. This youthful yearning changed the course of his life. His mother arranged for lessons in a mass-production music class attended by twenty-three youngsters in addition to Ted.

Fiddles Were Free

Each aspiring virtuoso had to pay only one and six a week. "At the end of thirty weeks," Ted recalls whimsically, "we got our fiddles free. I still can't figure how it was done."

Three or four years after this, Ted left school to work in the office of a manufacturer of cattle food. He soon lost his appetite for that, but while he was still a clerk a friend phoned. "I think," said the friend, "I can get you some evening engagements playing in a dance band."

This dance band work was spasmodic at best, but it paid twelve shillings for what was known as a short evening (from eight until twelve) and a full guinea for a ball (from eight until two). Considering that Ted's office job had earned him only £1 for a full week's work, the fee seemed more than generous.

Later he wangled a job as a steward on a transatlantic passenger liner, but to get it he had to throw in his services, at no extra pay, as violinist for the third-class orchestra. He soon found that he was not cut out to be a sailor.

An Important Party

He went back to his part-time playing in dance bands. One night he attended a party in Everton, a district of Liverpool, and met a young man named Harry Wardle, who had once been on the stage. The two teamed up as a singing, piano-and-violin-playing team.

Arthur Prendergast, manager of the Clubmore Cinema in Liverpool, looked over their act and signed them for a week at £10 to play between the pictures. They decided to follow the local cinema circuit.

Ray began to get ideas. "Harry," he said, "we can't stay in Liverpool all our lives. We ought to play other towns."

"Not me," Wardle said. "I've got to think of my wife and kids." Reluctantly they broke up. Ted whipped a few time-tested gags together and with them, his fiddle and his songs, continued to fill the gap between moving pictures.

He would walk out on to the stage and say: "I once played this violin before the Shah of Persia. I asked him what he thought of my execution. He said he was in favour of it." He has improved a great deal since.

A period of touring in unimportant

"Are there any more balls, Sidney?"

revues followed and for a while it looked as if Ted had found his level somewhere near the bottom of the pile. Then he managed to get a date in the London Music Hall at Shoreditch which was then a shop window for acts that had never before been seen in the metropolis.

The first gag he ever cracked in London was inspired by a notice he saw written on the stage side of the fireproof curtain at Shoreditch. Ray simply tucked his fiddle under his chin and said: "This theatre can be emptied in three minutes." Then he started to play. He was getting better.

In October, 1930—as a passenger—he sailed for a three months' tour of South Africa at a salary of £25 a week, and on his return was delighted to find that such Number One variety houses as the Birmingham Hippodrome, the Empire, Liverpool, and the Holborn Empire were eager for his services. Two years later he made the variety artists' Valhalla by playing the Palladium.

Ray kept plugging at his work. In 1939, John Sharman, who was producing *Music Hall*, invited him to try a broadcast. It was his first and he liked it. During the war he played in variety, revues, E.N.S.A. and pantomime.

He Gets The Last Word

He had been Buttons in *Cinderella*, Idle Jack in *Dick Whittington* and in 1943 played Dame Widow Twankey in *Aladdin* at the Hippodrome, Coventry. Thus, when he noted in the letters column of a national newspaper a query which sought the origin of the custom in which women wear men's clothes and men wear women's in pantomime, he penned what he considered to be an authoritative reply.

"This," he wrote, "is because in the old days mummers would switch clothes at the end of the season for their own amusement. It proved so successful it developed into pantomime as we know it now."

Lupino Lane read Ray's explanation.

"Comedian Ted Ray," he wrote in a letter, "is quite wrong. The custom goes away back to the ancient Roman Bacchanalian revels."

But Ted, as he often does, had the last word. "Mr. Lane," he wrote, "ought to know. *He* was there."

Ted is renowned among variety experts as a man who is rarely bested in an ad-libbing contest.

A little over a year ago he was playing at the Grand Theatre in Blackpool with Henry Hall. One night Hall came on to the stage and departed from the prepared script almost at once.

"I'm going," he said. "You carry on alone."

"Going?" asked Ray. "Where?"

"To get some food. I've had no lunch and no tea."

Ray glared at him. "No," he said. "You stay and I'll go. I'm not going to stay here and talk to an empty Hall."

Search For A Title

He has a comment to make about almost everything. Take television. "Frankly," Ted declares, "I don't think it will ever replace the good, old-fashioned keyhole."

But, several months ago, Ray couldn't seem to find the title he wanted for his new radio show. One Saturday night he was driving Londonwards from Bristol with Sidney Smith, manager of the Stoll.

"I'm worried about the title for that show," Ted said. "It's tentatively called *Everything's Under Control*. I don't like it."

"Why not," Smith suggested quietly, "call it *Ray's A Laugh*?"

Since Ted is partial to multiple play on single words, this caught his fancy. "That's *it*!" he shouted.

For once, someone else had beaten him to his own punch line—and during his big year, too.

Ray plays his violin at home with his wife and sons. Off duty, he likes a quiet life—and a game of golf

JOHN BULL November 5 1949

30,000 SILENT CITIES

by ***IAN BEVAN***

Oaks keep vigil in foreign fields; flowers bloom in the desert. Tending our war graves is work that is ceaseless and world wide

Tobruk, 1949. As long as they last, these fields of white crosses will remain places of pilgrimage

RUDYARD KIPLING called them "the silent cities": those burial grounds throughout the world where lie the Empire's war dead. There are 30,000 of them now. They are in almost every country—107 in the first World War, 116 in the second—and on their tombstones and memorials are the names of more than a million and a half men and women.

These are the corners of the foreign fields of which Rupert Brooke, the poet, spoke, and indeed they remain "for ever England"; the graves carefully tended, the green grass growing and the red roses blooming, be the cemetery in England itself, on a Pacific island, in the desert, or deep in the heart of Europe.

To care for the graves in perpetuity, British countries have co-operated since 1917 in a common group, the Imperial War Graves Commission, which spent about £10,000,000 building the cemeteries and memorials for the first World War and is spending another £10,000,000 now.

Repairing The Damage

Into a rambling old house in Buckinghamshire, where the Commission has its headquarters, come reports from Tobruk where Arab labourers and Greek stonemasons are constructing the siege cemetery; from Villers-Bretonneux where repairs have started on the only bad damage to a first World War memorial which occurred in the second; from Regina in Canada, Lae in New Guinea, Yokohama in Japan, Arnhem in Holland, Coriano Ridge in Italy, Asmara in Eritrea.

A typical day may bring a telegram asking permission to buy 40,000 rose plants from Belgium for German cemeteries; a suggestion from the Australian Government for rewording the war graves treaty with Iraq; a letter from the White Fathers about a grave in the Thibar Cemetery in Tunisia; and a report from a botanist at Kew Gardens on new types of drought-resistant grasses suitable for Greece.

Every day, too, brings scores of letters from next-of-kin inquiring about the condition of graves, answering requests for personal details, or quoting texts they have chosen for headstones.

Each next-of-kin may choose an individual text of up to sixty letters, and correspondence on this point alone keeps a big staff busy. More than half the texts are from the Bible and the first choice is, "Greater love hath no man than this."

Headstones, most of them of Portland stone, are being carved at the rate of more than 1,000 a week but there are at least 375,000 to do. Someone must be last—a fact which many relatives find it hard to understand — but new methods of mechanical engraving have speeded up a task which should end by 1954.

The size and scope of the Commission's work is surprising. It ranges from diplomacy (it is at present negotiating war graves treaties with seven Powers) to gardening.

Treaties which guarantee British possession of cemeteries and rights of access are the first essential. Generally the foreign Power buys the title to the land and gives the use of it to the Commission in perpetuity. An exception is the Anzac area on the Gallipoli Peninsula which Turkey ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Lausanne.

Iron Curtain Troubles

The iron curtain applies to war graves just as it does to everything else.

Czechoslovakia is the only one of the Communist satellites which has so far made satisfactory arrangements. She has agreed to look after the 250 British graves of the last war and build a cemetery at Prague to our design. In return, we look after the 301 Czech graves in the United Kingdom.

The Commission has not yet been able to make permanent arrangements with Albania (52 British graves), Bulgaria (27), Hungary (206), Rumania (81), Jugoslavia (481) or the Soviet Union where there are known to be thirty-one British graves from the last war and possibly more.

War graves in Russia have been a problem for many years. There are thousands of them dating back to the Crimean campaign.

The largest cemetery was at Cathcart's Hill, near Sebastopol, with about 4,000 graves, and for many years after the revolution an ex-Imperial Russian General named Klebnikhov was in charge. He "disappeared" in the thirties and a Communist took over, but no one in Britain knows what has happened to the new man or the cemetery since 1939.

There are 362 graves in Russia from the first World War, most of them at Murmansk, and there is a memorial at Archangel commemorating 191 missing. These, too, are beyond British control but there is no reason to suppose the Russians have not maintained them in good condition. In any case, the 325 Russian war graves in this country are carefully tended.

The most difficult problem at present is Burma, where there are at least 10,000 graves which cannot be adequately cared for until the Burmese Government can guarantee the safety of British representatives. The Palestine fighting also left many graves in urgent need of attention, and this problem has yet to be raised with the Israel Government.

Luckily the cemeteries of the first World War suffered little damage during the second.

In most of the occupied European

countries,' local committees continued to look after things when the British staffs were interned or evacuated. They worked well in Italy, but in Germany there was some damage from neglect.

One of the Commission's head gardeners, Robert Armstrong, stayed on to look after the cemetery at Valenciennes after France had been overrun. Though he had served in the Irish Guards during the first World War, he held an Eire passport and could probably have continued without molestation as a neutral.

He Planned Escape Route

But Armstrong decided he should take a more active part. He helped Allied soldiers and airmen to escape, came under suspicion, and was eventually arrested at the end of 1943 for striking a German soldier who had kicked the flowers placed on British graves by local French people.

He was sentenced to death; the sentence was commuted to fifteen years' imprisonment, and he was sent to Waldheim Prison in Saxony, where he died at the end of 1944. The French Government awarded him the *Medaille de la Resistance* and the people of Valenciennes set up a tablet to his memory in the cemetery which he used to tend.

Throughout the world, British war cemeteries have an infinite variety of design and setting, but all have a common theme. Graves are marked with individual headstones, there are narrow borders of flowers along each long line, and in between are lawns. In all but the smallest cemeteries there is a cross of sacrifice and a stone of remembrance with the inscription chosen from Ecclesiasticus by Kipling: "Their name liveth for evermore."

Three general principles, approved by the Imperial Conference of 1918 and followed ever since, are that all memorials should be permanent, that headstones should be uniform, and that there should be no distinction for rank.

The second and third of these have not been accepted without argument. There was some criticism, for instance, when the body of Lieutenant-Colonel Geoffrey Keyes, hero of the commando raid on Rommel's headquarters, was moved from a grave in which the Germans had buried him with full military honours and a special memorial, to Benghazi, where he was reburied alongside an unknown soldier in a grave marked only by the standard, temporary wooden cross.

Who can say what Keyes himself would have wished? Most Servicemen endorse the principle of equality. Field Marshal Earl Haig is only one of many famous men buried beneath a simple, standard headstone.

All the work has been to the designs of leading architects. Wherever possible, British stone is used. Sometimes local conditions of soil or climate make this unwise. In Egypt they have opened special quarries in order to supply stone for the walls of the desert cemeteries.

The standard flower is the Polyantha rose, which is hardy and has an unusually long flowering season. In Australia, where it does not grow so well, a local horticulturist has bred a new type which he has named "Remembrance."

In cemeteries in many parts of the world, the English oak, Canadian maple and American blue-gum trees have been grown for the first time.

Costs are shared between the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and the British West Indies in proportion to each country's total of identified graves. For the first World War, the United Kingdom paid 81.5 per cent. Percentages for the second World War have not been worked out, and in the meantime the Commission runs provisional accounts.

The record of the total number of dead for both wars has not yet been completed, but it will be some 1,700,000, of whom about four in every seven are buried in identified graves.

Sometimes identification comes after several years and by coincidence; as in the case of the sailor who exchanged identity discs with his W.R.N.S. fiancée just before he was killed on the Dieppe raid. The French buried him under the name on the identity disc. His parents were informed that he was missing, believed killed.

In August, 1947, they went to the ceremony conducted at Dieppe on the anniversary of the raid. When it was over, a Frenchman approached the sailor's mother and asked if she would say a prayer over the grave of the only woman in the cemetery.

She did so, read the name of her son's fiancée on the headstone and, knowing of the change of identity discs, found herself at her son's grave.

All Will Be Recorded

Somewhere, either on individual headstones or on one of the big memorials for the missing, the name of every member of the British forces who died will eventually be recorded.

The number of casualties in the second World War was much lower than in the first, and the proportion of identified graves is higher. Two memorials of 1914-18, the Somme and Menin Gate, between them commemorate almost as many missing as there were on all fronts in 1939-45.

One of the biggest memorials to the missing this time will be at El Alamein where there will be about 4,000 names of soldiers and airmen from the Western Desert campaign.

Other Army memorials will be built at Dunkirk and Bayeux in France, Groesbeek in Holland, Medjez El Bab in Tunisia, Cassino in Italy, Singapore, Hongkong, and somewhere in Burma. The names of missing naval men will be added to the R.N. memorials at the manning ports of Portsmouth, Plymouth and Chatham, and three new memorials will be built at Liverpool (naval auxiliary), Lowestoft (patrols) and Lee-on-Solent (Fleet Air Arm).

R.A.F. Remembers Malta

The Air Force will have special memorials at Malta and somewhere in the United Kingdom. The Merchant Navy will probably have a new memorial, as it may not be possible to add to the existing one on Tower Hill.

Probably the loneliest job in the Commission's world-wide roster belongs to Tasman Millington who, since 1919, has looked after the thirty-one British cemeteries on the bleak Gallipoli Peninsula. He and his wife live at Canakkale, the only non-Turkish residents of a little port which foreigners must reach by boat from Istanbul. Overland trips are forbidden in case travellers should learn defence secrets.

Here are commemorated some 36,000 British and 9,000 French soldiers, sailors and marines who fell in the disastrous attempt of 1915 to force the Dardanelles.

The British cemeteries—of necessity the least visited and the least known of all—are the more peaceful and in that sense the more beautiful, because they are almost completely undisturbed by human contact.

"This is almost a new form of art," one veteran official of the Commission explained it. "We have blended the skills of the architect and the creative gardener to make something which is both a tribute to the dead and an inspiration to the living."

Thousands Of Visitors

As long as the cemeteries exist, they will remain places of pilgrimage. Five voluntary organizations in Britain assist relatives to visit war graves, and many foreign governments also help. Thousands have already made visits to graves of the second World War.

In Tobruk recently there was a wreath of poppies on the grave of a young infantry lieutenant, with a card which read: "In proud and loving memory of my dear son Reggie. My pilgrimage has been made. Dad."

Those are the words of a simple pilgrim whose thoughts, naturally, were for one in all the thousands.

Another pilgrim spoke in wider terms. He was King George V, who made an extended tour in 1922 of the cemeteries in France and Belgium. At the end, in Terlincthun Cemetery, near Boulogne, he said: "Can there be more potent advocates of peace upon earth, through the years to come, than this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war?"

Tyne Cot, Passchendaele, the biggest of the British war cemeteries. The flowers are Polyantha roses

I can hear my own voice screaming, smell my own flesh burning. Then the room slants slowly away

THE MAN ON THE TABLE

by LIONEL DAVIDSON

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD SEARLE

Who put you up to it? Who were your accomplices? . . . Hour after hour, it goes on. But I shall never tell

I'LL NEVER TELL. They cannot make me. Occasionally, when this swinish brute leans over me, and the sudden biting pain of the hot iron pierces through all the other pains, I can swing out into oblivion. It comes up like a great flower unfolding; first the red-hot core in the centre, throbbing, growing larger, larger.

Then, when it seems I can't bear any more, when I must give up for it to stop, I can see the petals flickering up, those merciful petals of oblivion, stretching out from the centre, reaching up to enfold me.

I can hear my own voice screaming, smell my own flesh burning, and the face above me, the face of my torturer, becomes only a mouth full of teeth, row upon row of square, even teeth. The room slants slowly, ponderously away, and I'm safe again. I haven't spoken. They cannot make me.

Bearing torture is an attitude of mind. You must space out the seconds, timing them from your heartbeats. Every second you keep silence is a triumph, a great battle won. To forget the pain is impossible, so you must make something of the pain. Scream. Rave. Curse. You cannot give in now, not after a lifetime of fighting intolerance.

Imagine you are the torturer. Imagine you've got Tresham on the table: Tresham, who talked. . . .

I never trusted him from the start. It was C. who said we had to have him. We needed more money. For the past year, we had been skating on thin ice. The plans were made; we couldn't risk any trouble. There could be no refusing to pay the fines the police kept levying for the hundreds of trumped-up charges.

The charges usually followed the same sort of pattern. Someone would start a street fight, the soldiers would be called in, and next day, some of our men would be in court, "apprehended creating a disturbance." There was never any shortage of witnesses.

We paid. We apologized. What was the use of arguing, anyway? We couldn't risk defiance. With the purge going full strength throughout the country, we never had a chance.

Meanwhile, we'd bought two houses, one next to the Building, the other up the river. In the house on the river we'd got the stuff stored. It took several months to amass it, then we had to shift it by boat at night to the house next to the Building. Food as well. Four of us would live there, never setting foot outside the house until we'd finished the tunnel and mined the place.

It was a wonderful plan. C. had plotted it to the last detail. The only thing he overlooked was the fact that a few feet underground we struck water, oozing in from the river. And that was the end of that plan.

But still we weren't beaten. Directly above our tunnel was a cellar. While digging, we had heard people walking up above.

I went to examine it, found it belonged to a coal merchant who, by a phenomenal piece of luck, was shortly vacating it. It was the first time luck had been

with us, and C. brightened up at once. Lately, as the time drew near, he had been looking drawn and haggard.

C. was the leader of our group. I knew little of his personal life except that he had been a rich playboy who had become suddenly converted to our ideas. I met him through Winter, a man I had known while I was underground in Spain.

When he heard about the cellar he was a new man. The fire came back into him. We would have to hire the cellar. And somehow, we'd have to get the explosives up there.

But the biggest problem was money. Now that the original plan was put off we would have to keep going for another few months. We would have to lie low, keep out of trouble. It all meant money.

FROM the start I was against introducing any new people into the group. In our sort of work there isn't safety in numbers. The more men who know, the more tongues there are to wag. Most of our sympathizers had been robbed of their property, anyway, and had no funds to offer us. The ones that still had money were watched like hawks.

C. appreciated this as well as I did. He was irritable and nervy. But at last he made his mind up. We would recruit three more men.

My heart sank to my boots when I met Tresham. I'd known this sort before. I'd met them in Spain, these fire-eaters, full of bluff and bombast.

But we got the money. We took the cellar. We managed to get the stuff in. We bought a ship which, on the day of the big bang, would be ready in the river for a quick getaway. All we had to do now was wait.

The days dragged on and C. reverted again to his moodiness. He was worried and went endlessly over the details. He was not a violent man. Blood sickened him, and the thought of the destruction and the loss of life that we would cause gave him nightmares.

It was wonderful, too, to see the change that came over Tresham. Now that he had become part of the machine and saw that we were in deadly earnest the wind went out of his sails.

Weren't members of our own party going to be sacrificed in the explosion? Wasn't there some way we could warn them?

C.'s eyes glowed as he answered him. "The terror that we endure planning this thing, knowing that we will be destroying those we love, is greater than they will have to bear. To die swiftly, unknowingly for the cause would be a sweet thing."

Yes, we had thought about all that and had made peace with our consciences. It was something that had to be done. We had to forget what would happen a few minutes after I lit the fuse. The only thing was to consider the plan as an impersonal problem, a tactical exercise.

Now, as I knew he would, Tresham began to sap that finely poised resolution.

He had two brothers-in-law in there, he said. Didn't we all know them? Could you find better men anywhere in the country? Wouldn't they be of great use to us afterwards? Where was the sense in killing them to round off a perfect plan? What would be easier than to send them an urgent note warning them on the day?

What *would* be easier? It was too damned easy. If he could do it, why couldn't we all? Why couldn't we send little notes to our friends? And on the day, what would be easier than for the Government spies to look round, see all our party absent and grow suspicious?

I think I could have done something about it if I'd been with them more often. But under the new plan I was away most of the time. I was caretaker of the cellar. One of us had to be there all the time in case anyone came nosing around.

The cellar had been hired in Percy's name. He was an estate manager, and the story was that the cellar was being used to accommodate firewood and surplus stores. As caretaker it gave me a legitimate excuse for poking about all day.

A few days before the operation I was to join the party at C.'s country house and the cellar would be left by itself.

This was C.'s idea, and it was a good one. This way we would soon see if anything had leaked out. On the day itself the whole machine would go into action. I was to spend the previous night in the cellar, while the rest would split up, some to take care of groups in other parts of the country, some to stand by the ship. As soon as I heard the assembly above the cellar I would light the slow fuse, lock the cellar door and hot-foot it down to the river, where I would row myself to the ship.

ALL went according to plan and on the appointed day I went down to the house in the country.

It wasn't too good there. C. spent most of the time pacing up and down. I could hear his footsteps at night as I lay in bed. But Winter had joined us, too, the man I had known in Spain. He was a good scout and somehow the time went by. Then Tresham turned up.

The minute I saw him I knew something was wrong. He had a nervous fidget, and for an hour he never mentioned anything about warning his friends. Even C. noticed it.

"I'm glad to see you've got things settled in your mind," he said slowly. "You realize now why we cannot risk warning any of our people?"

Tresham saw us all looking at him. He went red. He began to speak and stopped.

In the creaking silence C. got up and walked to the window. He stood there, his back to us, for a full five minutes. No one said anything.

Suddenly, Tresham couldn't stand it any more.

"All right," he said. "Have it your way. I'm off. Don't worry about me. I can keep a still tongue."

We heard him go out and ride off.

C. turned round. His eyes looked a little mad.

"We will go ahead as planned," he said. His voice was scarcely a whisper. "I don't know what he's done, or what he's thinking of doing. I've forgotten him. He's not one of us any more. He never existed. The plan will be executed."

That was six days before. We got through the week somehow. On the Monday I shook hands all round. We had a last drink. C. said "Good luck," and I left.

It was still light when I got to town. I walked all round the Building. Everything looked all right. There were no extra guards.

I went to the cellar. On the way I met the watchman and said good evening.

"Nice night," he said. "Should be fine for the opening tomorrow."

He didn't know the half of it!

I went down the steps, lit the old lamp, swung open the door. Everything was fine, exactly as I'd left it. I felt under the firewood. The stuff was there all right, thirty-six cases of it, enough to blow the whole works to glory.

I fixed the fuses, ran the slow taper out round the stone floor, went over every inch of it to see that damp hadn't got at it. Everything had to work smoothly by itself once I'd lit it, because I didn't intend loitering.

THERE wasn't much to do, really. Everything had been well arranged before, through the long months of waiting for the right moment. There wasn't even much to think about. I'd thought about it so often, the whole thing was as grey and uninteresting as the blank wall of the cellar.

After a while, I locked up again and went out for some fresh air. The watchman was talking to a soldier. They chatted for a few minutes, then the soldier left to make his rounds. The watchman came over.

"Been a robbery or something," he said. "You heard anything about it?"

"Robbery? Here?"

"Seems the burglars were seen making off in this direction. The soldier was telling me there'll probably be a search."

My nerves jangled.

He laughed.

"You know their searches. Lazy lot of so-and-so's. I expect they'll swing a lamp down the passages and call 'em searched. Leave me your key if you want to go away. I don't suppose they'll want to look in, but you never know."

"No," I said slowly. "No, I'll be staying here tonight. I've got to make an early start in the morning."

We stayed chatting for a few minutes longer, but I hardly knew what he was saying. The alarm bell was jangling in my mind. This was the way things went wrong. Suppose they did make a thorough search; suppose there was a new, officious sergeant on duty; suppose any of a dozen fiddling little possibilities, and the game would be up.

Somehow, I had to get word to the others. Percy was still in town. Would I have time to get to him before the search took place?

I paced up and down in the cellar, hearing my footbeats, trying to steady my nerves. I had almost decided to lock up and go when I heard voices. I strained my ears, but through the thick walls it was difficult to distinguish what was being said.

I opened the door and stood outside, pretending to fiddle with the lock. The watchman was at the end of the passage. He stood to attention before a couple of well-dressed men. They began walking down the passage, glancing idly about them. They stopped when they reached me.

"Who owns this cellar?"

"Mr. Percy, sir."

"What's in it?"

"Surplus stores, sir. Mr. Percy is an estate manager. I'm his caretaker."

"What's your name, my man?"

"Johnson, sir." That was all part of the story, too.

One of the men stepped in. The watchman swung his lamp inside.

"Nice lot of fuel," said the man carelessly, gazing round.

Then they were gone. It took me five minutes to recover. Had they seen the thin fuse coiled round the cellar? I thought not. The lamp had thrown the floor into shadow. *But I couldn't be sure.* I had to get to Percy, as much to steady my own nerves as to put the others on their guard.

I locked up again and walked briskly to his house. The sight of him steadied me. He was calm and collected and he listened carefully to my story.

"We're inclined to imagine the worst," he said. "I feel a little jumpy myself. It's natural. However, I don't see what we can do about it. If they'd suspected anything you wouldn't have been allowed to come and see me. The place would have been surrounded with troops."

That was reasonable enough.

I went back to the cellar, said goodnight to the watchman and locked myself in. There was nothing for it now but to wait, to wait for the one mad, glorious moment that all the past months and years had led up to.

I wasn't nervous now. I wasn't even excited about it. I sat down on a chair and stretched my feet up on another to get a few hours' rest. It was quite early yet. At midnight I'd get up and have a look outside.

I must have dozed off, because the next thing I remember was waking with a start to hear a clock booming. I tried to count the strokes, but I must have missed some. I stretched and yawned and got up. I stamped up and down for a few minutes to restore the circulation, then I unlocked the door and swung it open. . . .

PRACTICALLY the whole army was camped out there. For one sickening second I froze; then they were all about me. We struggled on the floor and I tried to get a lighter out of my pocket: the fuse was only a few inches away. But it was no good.

That's how it was. That's how Tresham kept a still tongue. That's what I must think of as the oblivion lifts and I come to the surface again, burning, aching, every nerve taut with agony.

The face of the torturer retires. The other face comes into focus, the long, pale face of the man in the cloak.

"You know we must discover the names ultimately. Who did you go to see that night of the fifth of November? Where is Catesby? Why will you not tell and spare yourself the torture?"

I try to spit at him, but there is no saliva in my mouth.

He shrugs, shakes his head, signals to the torturer.

"You are a foolish blackguard. Remember, the torture is of your own choosing."

The torturer again; the hot iron; the intolerable agony. But I will never tell. They cannot make me.

OH, JOHNNY! **by TIM**

The B.B.C.'s new voice: "One day it struck me that ordinary people didn't get a look-in on the air"

Before fame came: the Pickleses in their Manchester home. "Our friends were unassuming, workaday folk"

MY LIFE (5) by WILFRED PICKLES

I start announcing—Yorkshire fashion

Mabel and I dodge la-di-da parties . . . I become a B.B.C. announcer and decide I will hang on to my broad "a"

IT WAS IN OUR NEW home in Whalley Range, Manchester, that Mabel and I entered upon one of the happiest periods of our lives, made a host of new friends and learned a thing or two about house-parties.

I had contracts for several weeks in advance safely signed and tucked away and the future looked reasonably bright, if not completely secure. We opened a bank account and even took out a cheque book!

Both Mabel and I found a real delight in entertaining her mother and father, or visiting the ordinary folk who were among our friends; but the stagey, pretentious parties thrown by well-known members of the B.B.C. or prosperous people who did a bit of acting, had no appeal for us.

Quite frankly, we recoiled from these artificial affairs, where the guests merely used the host and hostess to pour the drinks, completely ignoring them while trying to impress some producer. Despite their superficial gloss of casualness, these parties were regarded by most of the guests as privileged auditions.

I hated them; I could not stand the over-easy way in which everybody sat on the floor, leaving all the chairs unoccupied. They drank odd concoctions I had never seen before, dropping in flavouring like lemon slices and mint.

Quietly, Mabel and I sat through two or three of these dreadful gatherings before turning our backs on them altogether. I compared them with the happy evenings we had with our new-found friends and learned for the first time that there is nothing quite like the genuine fun to be had from the company of unassuming, workaday folk with no illusions about artistic attainments or fame.

A Game Of Pontoon

Among our closest friends were the Maguires. Mr. Maguire was a Manchester Corporation painter and in his early years had tried the variety stage. His eldest son also took up painting, and produced some really outstanding work as a specialist in interior decoration. Fred, the second son, was an estate agent's clerk.

Our kind of evening was to sit around the table and get down to a keen game of pontoon, with excitement rising every few minutes and observations from everybody. We had beer to drink and usually finished up with a sing-song, surrounding a piano that was never properly tuned.

It was sheer love of company and friendship that kept those little parties going, and I never had the feeling that anyone was there to try to get something out of any of the others.

We also shared some homely evenings with a commercial traveller, Jack Marsh, and his wife. When we visited them we would fix it up for somebody to look after David, and when they came to us, they made similar arrangements for the care of their own two children.

There would be a game of cards, bridge or solo, followed by a call at the "local." Jack was a happy man and I recall asking him once what he wanted to do in life. "If I can get ten pounds a week I'll consider it's just what I'm aiming for!" was his immediate reply.

I liked that simple sincerity; and it occurred to me that the vast majority of ordinary folk were just like Jack. They wanted no more than a reasonable share of the good things in life. They found contentment, as Jack had found, in a normal married life and rearing a family. And these were the people we liked.

While my family and social life was so happy and satisfying and I felt I could throw out roots in Manchester, I was still not wholly easy about my future in broadcasting, although work was now falling into my lap.

Then came an offer right out of the blue! John Salt sent for me one morning, held out his hand as soon as I entered his office, and said: "I'll out with it right away. Would you like to be a holiday relief announcer?"

This was something far beyond my wildest dreams. I was overwhelmed by the offer and straightaway dashed outside to ring Mabel from a call-box. I decided not to use the B.B.C. telephone in case an operator were to note my undignified excitement!

An announcer! I rejoiced at the prospect of joining the two Manchester announcers, Freddy Allen, who was eventually to become a well-known news reader in wartime, and the tall, handsome Humphrey Donner, a Territorial Army Officer.

Listened To Hibberd

John Salt had pointed out that I would have to take a test, so once again I practised reading to Mabel at home. I read out programmes from the *Radio Times* and listened closely, critically, to the London announcers, Stuart Hibberd and David Lloyd James, at every opportunity.

Soon, I found myself slipping into their style of using the long "a," saying "pahst" instead of "past." But I didn't like it. "If I'm going to be a North Regional announcer, why not use my own voice?" I said.

Mabel agreed. "You might get a perfect imitation of those fellows, but if you're going to be individual, you ought

Mabel and Wilfred out shopping: at this time he was searching for a really suitable niche in radio

to do what's never been done before—speak like a north countryman!"

This seemed strange coming from Mabel, who is quite incapable of speaking even one word of dialect.

Although I knew I would be allowed to prepare my own imaginary programme introductions for this audition, I had a feeling that, to test me out adequately, they would thrust something at me that I had not seen before.

They did. I had been prepared for foreign language announcements and the smattering of French I picked up at night school as a youth came in useful.

I had also managed to accustom my ears to spoken French by listening to the radio, which introduced me, too, to the pronunciation of Italian musical terms.

Going up to the "mike" in that empty studio, I negotiated my announcements of French, German and Italian musical pieces fairly well: then came trouble!

French Novel Foxed Me

I was handed a French novel to read. This was a far cry from the short announcements of a few familiar words, and I soon stumbled awkwardly, sounding an "h" where it should have been silent, exaggerating the acute accent, and floundering over the liaison between words.

"I've messed this up properly" I thought, as John Salt came out of the listening room with Humphrey Donner, where he had been judging my fitness to announce.

Then, to my surprise, I noticed that John was grinning broadly.

"Well, that's fine," he said. "We'd like you to start! We thought your announcements were extremely good, but when you read the French novel, I didn't know what the hell you were talking about!"

"That's not the least bit surprising—I didn't know myself!" I replied. And laughing, the three of us left the studio. But I resolved there and then to remedy the defect and arranged to go to school once a week for lessons in French.

The job of holiday relief announcer was a handy one, for it left me as a freelance and able to take up contracts for other broadcasting work, apart from giving me a guaranteed five pounds a week. It also meant that I was seen regularly about the building to remind producers that my voice was still on the market.

Freddy Allen and Humphrey Donner were delightful colleagues. They schooled me in the arts of announcing and encouraged me in my bid to stick to my natural voice.

Donner had a soldier's philosophy, was steely and, it seemed to me, completely unemotional. A stickler for punctuality, he had most of the qualities the B.B.C. looked for: he was steady, correct, just a voice without emotion, and his announcements were precisely right in every detail, cold and without feeling.

In direct contrast was Freddy, who was short, greying, and probably the most untidily dressed man in the Corporation. His terrific sense of humour made it an entertainment to work with him and his warm personality came out in his voice.

I was thrilled when I got my first duty as an announcer, and as I strode into Broadcasting House on that bright, dry morning and the commissionaire said: "Good morning, Mr. Pickles," I recalled passing through the same doors for my first audition, years earlier, and how for later productions I had eaten in Woolworth's because I was too nervous to go inside before rehearsals or broadcasts.

It was indeed a good morning, even if there was talk of what Hitler would do next and of the possibilities of another war breaking out.

But Adolf Hitler was certainly not in my mind as I went up in the lift to make my first announcement—an introduction to the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra. I was thinking only of the long or short "a." And, as the light flashed on, I began my announcement, sticking to the short "a." I half-expected some comment, but no objections were forthcoming from the B.B.C., probably, I thought, because nobody in Broadcasting House had heard the programme.

Early Morning Start

It was not long before I became a full-time announcer, for Humphrey Donner was called up with the Territorials. Freddy Allen took over the senior announcer's duties and I moved in, still as a freelance.

We worked shifts from ten o'clock in the morning until half-past five at night, and from half-past five until eleven o'clock. Sometimes when we announced the early "Lift Up Your Hearts" programme, it entailed starting at seven o'clock in the morning and working right through until tea-time.

During my early announcing days a little girl wrote to the *Radio Times* to say that she imagined all announcers sat at a small table drinking wine! This was not so fantastic as it seemed, for in London the news readers wore their dress suits for the evening bulletins. While we avoided this in the north, Freddy Allen and I still claimed the half-crown dress allowance!

One day, however, when Lord Derby was giving a broadcast talk from the Manchester studios, it was suggested tactfully that I might dress appropriately for the occasion. I carried my rigout in a suitcase to Piccadilly and changed in the announcers' office.

As the time for the programme approached, I went up to John Coatman's room, which had been turned into a makeshift but cosy studio, and was there introduced to Lord Derby, whose big, round face wrinkled into a smile as he exclaimed: "Pickles! I believe you've put your dress suit on for my benefit!"

"Oh, no sir, not at all!" I replied hastily, almost trying to give him the impression I wore it all day long, like a waiter at the Midland Hotel.

After the broadcast, I hurried back to the office and changed again into my lounge suit. About half an hour later, fully believing that Lord Derby had left for home, I was walking along one of the corridors, when suddenly I saw him, straight ahead and coming towards me.

As he met me, he tugged at my sleeve and said: "There you are, Pickles! I knew very well you had put that dress suit on for my benefit!"

A month or two afterwards, Lord Derby agreed to make another broadcast. He was suffering from acute rheumatism and was not fit to travel to Manchester, so the B.B.C. took a suite at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, and converted it into a studio.

A Guard Of Honour

I was detailed to go over there to announce the programme. When I reached the hotel, I was astonished to find that the manager, thrilled at the prospect of a visit from such a great figure as Lord Derby, had lined up all his waiters, page boys and porters to form a guard of honour.

There they were, in two straight files, all the way from the door to the lift! I stood at the head of this human avenue. As the Rolls-Royce drew up and Lord Derby hobbled out on two sticks, a hush descended on the hotel.

There was not a sound until, as he looked up and saw me standing there, Lord Derby called out in a voice that echoed right through the building: "Ah, Pickles! Thank God you haven't put your dress suit on!"

Not all prominent people were as confident as Lord Derby before a microphone, and one of our functions as announcers was to do all we could to make speakers feel easy and help them over the various stages of "mike-fright."

The soothing manner we had to adopt was carried to excess by one announcer who, in trying to console a member of His Majesty's Government, said in an encouraging tone: "I shouldn't worry, sir, if I were you. I don't think anybody will be listening!"

Another of our responsibilities was to see that a gramophone record was put on whenever a programme ran under its allotted time. The B.B.C. was rich in stories of announcers' gaffes with fill-in records.

One of the best was about the announcer who said: "Well, ladies and gentlemen, we have a few minutes in hand so I am going to play you a record of *The Fair Maid of Perth* by Bizet."

When the music had run its course, the announcer fell into the trap of saying: "We still have a minute or two left, ladies and gentlemen, so here is the other side of *The Fair Maid of Perth*."

As an announcer, I had access to the control room, where the unhonoured engineers—the real back-room boys of the B.B.C.—did a great job for which they were given no credit.

I found them a race apart, a bunch of down-to-earth men who did their job efficiently and left the intrigues and gossip to those members of the Corporation who came more into public notice.

One young fellow who came to us as an engineer I shall never forget. A real Yorkshire lad, his heart and soul were obviously in radio.

His first job was to sit in a tiny cubicle listening to the broadcasts, and he was told to record on a log sheet such details as the precise time each programme started and when it finished and to make a particular note of any breaks in transmission.

He dutifully wrote down programme times on his log sheet. Then suddenly, something went wrong with a transmitter and the broadcast broke down.

Instead of entering it in his log-book with the time in hours, minutes and seconds, he became completely panic-stricken, dashed out of his cubicle into the control room, and shouted to the engineers in the broadest Yorkshire accent: "Hey! t'wireless has gone off!"

It Was Tough On Mabel

With my long hours of announcing and other programmes on contract, I spent by far the most of my time in Broadcasting House, and Mabel experienced a very lonely spell. To David I almost became the strange man who called round to see Mummy on Sundays—and not really even that, because I was in the announcer's chair every other weekend!

I knew that many a wife would have declared: "Chuck it! We're not sacrificing home life for it!" But Mabel showed no signs of jibbing: on the contrary she looked well ahead and, whenever I brought the subject up, would say: "There'll be a settled job eventually."

Her conviction about my capabilities and her vague searching for something in radio that would be made to my measure set me thinking. I went over all the *Children's Hour* programmes, the features, drama, announcements and readings I had done. I imagined myself in new serials, in late night prose or poetry readings and a host of variety and musical shows. But I had to shrug my shoulders!

Then, one afternoon, as I went down into the City, past the miles of meagre streets, I was struck again by the hundreds of faces flashing by on the pavements. Homeward-bound men and women. Where did they work? What were their homes like? What were their hopes, ambitions, fears?

What uncovered human stories there were in those alleys and parlours and kitchens! Those grand, ordinary folk, who made up the real-life scene, were not given a look-in on the air. Yet the B.B.C. was presenting stage plays that were much better handled by the theatre, and snippets from films which were far, far better seen in a cinema.

Could the B.B.C. not go down Back Lane and call at number forty and get a real story? For surely there was one.

I remembered there was *In Town Tonight*, but odd characters were chosen, and I thought how much more interesting and original an interview would be with the labourer next door who swung a shovel for nine hours a day than with the man who had hitch-hiked all the way from India to Newcastle.

I little knew how near I was to the answer to Mabel's intuition.

NEXT WEEK: Our son, David, dies from Infantile Paralysis

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Any Ideas?

WHAT kind of mind have you got—a living organism in which ideas and thoughts change and grow, expanding into new ideas, or a dusty lumber room, in which all your ideas are neatly parcelled up into fixed beliefs and labelled "Do not disturb"?

A really free mind is far from common. Many of us cling to beliefs that we never question ourselves or allow others to question.

Yet the more passionately we hold a belief, the more we should ask ourselves what reasonable grounds we have for holding it.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

HURLING—IRELAND'S SPORTS SPECIAL

It's hockey with its coat off, tough, hot and rough. To the Irish it's more than a game. It's a part of their history

by ***DENNIS HOLMAN***

Tense moment in an All-Ireland championship match. After ice hockey, hurling is the world's fastest game

SEAN OG MURPHY: mention that name in Ireland and Irishmen immediately become serious and talk about the formidable Blackrock hurlers, and the legendary All-Ireland full-back who captained that club for fifteen years. (The "Og" means "Junior," that his father's name was also Sean.)

Today he is a big, open-faced Irishman, with blue eyes and a kindly voice. He works in a Cork shipping office. "The trouble with hurling," he greets you, "is that it never gets an honest write-up in the British Press.

"Meet me on Sunday at the Cork Athletic Grounds. At least we can start by watching the game played."

The grandstand is on a rise of ground overlooking the lush green patch, with a thick, herbaceous border of spectators all round. The hurling match is about to begin, for thirty men have taken the field, the goalkeepers and backs in position and the remainder facing each other, their elongated, comma-shaped wooden hurleys crossed along the centre line.

"Usually it's a Minister of State or a Church dignitary who throws in the ball in a big match, but this is just a county semi-final and that is a dean," Sean Og explains as a black-coated figure takes the ball from the referee, throws it down between the rows of players and doubles back nimbly off the field.

Hit It How You Like

The father and mother of ball and stick games has begun: hurling, not quite as it was played in the Celtic twilight of Irish history, but as a sort of hockey without inhibitions, the players kicking the ball, catching it in mid-air, striking it with both sides of the stick how and where they like.

The object is to score a goal, under the crossbar, counting three points, or over the crossbar, counting one point. The goal looks like the rugby affair, but is wider and the goalkeeper has a larger hurley but no pads.

Scoring is quick, but after a goal the ball is not centred for starting the game again. Instead, the "slitter" is "pucked" from the "parallelogram," five yards by fifteen yards, in front of the goal mouth.

There is not much whistle, and there are few restrictions as to how the "slitter" should be played. It may be caught in the hand in the air, but not lifted off the ground, or carried more than three steps. There is no off-side rule, except for attackers entering the parallelogram before the "slitter."

Fouls are pushing, tripping, kicking, catching, holding, jumping at, butting with the head or charging a player from behind. A player may not throw his hurley under any circumstances. But, in spite of this precautionary legislation, hurling is very much a man's game, hot and rough.

"Sure, it's not as dangerous as it looks," says Sean Og, who was himself put out of active hurling for life with an internal injury picked up in a match in 1927. Players apparently learn the art of ducking instinctively, and bad accidents in fair play are few.

Still, uniformed first-aid men attend all matches and run on with their kits the moment a player doubles up on the field. Casualties are replaced by substitutes as in American football.

Free pucks are given for all breaches of rules, or when the "slitter" passes outside the field of play, including the base lines. Free pucks may be delivered in any direction, the "slitter" being either struck on the ground, or scooped up with the hurley in one attempt and struck in the air. In sideline pucks, the "slitter" may not be scooped off the ground.

An Hour Is Enough

Teams play only thirty minutes each way, with half-time lasting ten minutes or more if the referee is as exhausted as the players. Perhaps because of the Irish disregard for the convention of punctuality, a rule permits a team to begin a match with only thirteen players, though it must field a full fifteen after half-time.

After ice hockey, hurling is claimed to be the fastest game in the world, played on a pitch 150 yards by ninety yards, with the "slitter" (horsehide packed with horsehair round a cork core, about the size of a tennis ball) soaring from side to side, often "doubled" in flight by yet another blow delivered high above the head, and the pack after it in full cry, waving hurleys like scimitars in the afternoon sunlight.

Yet both Sean Og Murphy and Henry O'Mahoney, another great veteran, agreed that this match was not an example of good hurling. Where were the players who could puck the slitter more truly than did the men of Tubberadora, Blackrock, Mooncoin or Tulla of a generation ago? Show one who could tackle, parry, side-slap, hook, pull, drive or "drop" a ball so well. And where had the young fellows learnt this baneful habit of "lift and catch" before hitting?

None seemed able to hit a decent ball on the sod, to be doubling with strength, or smacking a "flying drop" with any degree of accuracy. Hurling demands efficient hitters with supple wrists and a fine follow-through—like Billy Murphy of Ballincollig, with his puck of 140 yards, or Mick Cotter of the Shamrocks, with the wind behind him, pucking from goal to goal, or Dan Daly, who, perhaps, had the longest puck of all.

Lowry Meagher, Jim Kellehar, Mick Mackly, Eugene Coughlan, Pat Clohessy: these were the masters of the sweet and lovely puck, left or right, who'd blush if they had first to turn round before delivering the "slitter," as some of these young men were doing.

Game They Fought For

Dinny Lanigan, Jack Hasset, Willy Gleason, Willy Hough, Ned Grey, Jack Kern, Conny Sheehan, P. D. Mehigan: men who not only hurled like a host of avenging angels, but fought for the right to play their game.

Henry O'Mahoney, himself outlawed as a member of the I.R.A., caught and imprisoned on Spike Island, later escaped and continued organizing hurling matches advertised as being held in one place and played in another. For the game had been banned.

In 1920, as a reprisal for an attack on the British Intelligence H.Q. in Dublin, the Black and Tans surrounded Croke Park Stadium when a match was in progress, mounted their

Hurleys often get "lost" like this. But there is not much whistle

machine guns and opened fire on the game, killing Hogan, a Tipperary player, and several spectators.

Since the Statutes of Kilkenny in 1367, English lawmakers in Ireland had been trying to suppress the game and the Irish had kept it alive as part of their national identity. During the "Trouble" it became the symbol of the revolutionary spirit.

The rules, of course, had evolved with the centuries. As late as the 1880s parish hurled against parish, starting play at the parish boundary and attempting to get the ball back to their own church. Playing the game this way round was a precaution against the danger of the winners celebrating on enemy territory.

In 1884 the Gaelic Athletic Association was formed, and its architects, Michael Cusack and Maurice Davin, set about drafting a set of rules for the game and attempting to organize it on a national amateur basis.

Sixty-five years ago, the G.A.A. seemed no more than a bunch of nostalgically-minded patriots. Yet within a few years it had gripped the imagination of the people.

The Year's Highspot

Now the All-Ireland Senior Hurling final is the event of the year. Played on the first Sunday in September, it packs about 70,000 spectators into Croke Park Stadium.

The fourth Sunday in September is devoted to the Gaelic football final, a game sponsored by the G.A.A. and combining the features of soccer and rugby but following behind hurling in popularity.

Today there is scarcely a village in Ireland without at least a junior hurling club, hurling all the year round, for there is no closed season.

County championships for individual club teams are held in the three grades, minor, junior and senior, after which each county fields its best fifteen players and competes against other counties for the honour of representing one of the four historic provinces—Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connaught—in the All-Ireland tournament.

For the first ten years of this century, London Irish played in the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championships, actually beating Cork in 1901 in the final. Otherwise Cork has won the event sixteen times since it was instituted in 1887.

Cork's greatest rival is Tipperary, winners fourteen times, who have a saying: "If we have the hay saved and Cork beat, everything is all right."

Though the game has died out in the Celtic areas of Wales, Devon, Cornwall, Isle of Man, it still exists as shinty in Scotland. There the rules are slightly different. But Irishmen still hurl in London, Warwickshire, Lancashire, and the East Midlands; also in New York, Boston, San Francisco, Australia and South Africa.

Bitterness Is Going

The G.A.A., it seems, has attained its object. But a remnant of the old bitterness remains.

This is Rule 24 of its laws and rules: "Any member who plays or encourages Rugby, Association Football, Hockey or Cricket, by that very fact incurs immediate suspension from membership of the Association."

For those who wonder, Sean Og Murphy quotes a similar law of the A.A.A. of Great Britain, at a time when that body suspended Irish athletes if they competed under the auspices of the G.A.A.

But time heals. Blood pressure on both sides is subsiding, and even the most patriotic of Irishmen are beginning to feel that Rule 24 is now out of date. It can be discussed at every third annual meeting. But, while it has appeared on the agenda for the past two or three occasions, its abolition has not been moved.

"Who knows?" I heard a prominent man in G.A.A. circles say, "One day when the matter is put to the vote there may be more ayes than nays."

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

READERS with personal problems can obtain the help of *John Bull's* team of experts. Enquiries (other than medical) should be addressed to the *John Bull* Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

By way of personal explanation . . .

by HERBERT HODGE

WHILE I WAS RESTING from this column I made an odd discovery. If you want to start people talking about what you're doing, the one sure way is to stop doing it.

Almost everyone I met said, sooner or later: "Haven't seen you in JOHN BULL lately." After I'd explained I was only having a break and would be back soon, they'd say: "Glad to hear it." Then they'd go on to spoil it all by adding: "You've got a soft little job there, you know."

When I try to deny it, no one believes me; so I've learned to let that pass. I suppose it's a compliment, in a way. When people tell you that your stuff must be easy to write, they usually mean they've found it easy to read. If that isn't always the same thing, it isn't their business to know the difference. So a writer ought to be pleased—though I never meet one who is.

But the people who interested me most were those who went a bit deeper. "What I can't understand," said one man, "is why you keep writing about yourself. What makes you think you're so important that other people will want to read about you?"

My Early Discovery

Well, I couldn't tell him I didn't think I was important, because that obviously wouldn't have been true. To myself, I've always seemed important. But as soon as I started to toddle about the world, I discovered that nearly everybody else was quite unaware of it.

Whatever they read me for, it can't be that.

So I told this chap I supposed I wrote about myself because I couldn't think of anything else—or nothing else so interesting to me. But that explanation didn't satisfy him. He's a young chap; and comes from Lancashire. He likes to have everything cut and dried. "But what's the point of it?" he wanted to know. "What's the use of it?"

I could only say I hoped it was useful to somebody. He went off frowning; saying there must be a proper scientific explanation of people like me. I hope he's found it and set his mind at rest.

But another questioner, a woman, did help me to explain what I'm trying to do. She said: "What I can't understand are those letters from readers you sometimes write about. I can't think how people can bring themselves to write such letters—telling their intimate thoughts and problems to a stranger. I've often wondered if you sometimes make them up."

I was tempted to show her a few—and then I thought I'd better not; because of names and addresses. So I told her I hadn't got the brains to make them up.

My own opinion is that people write to me like this because they feel, after reading my stuff, that I must have been an even bigger fool than they've been, in my time, and got into even worse difficulties—and (perhaps) found a way out. Some of them say so. They say that if I can't help, they feel I'll at least understand. And that, I think, is the whole point.

Such Perfect People!

What disheartened me most as a youngster was that all the advice I read, on how to lead the perfect life and so forth, appeared to be written by perfect people. They told me exactly what I ought to do—and left me to infer that this was what they'd always done themselves. They never seemed to be troubled by any of the savage urges that troubled me. In fact, so far as I could make out, they didn't even suffer from the same physical needs.

The result was, I got discouraged; feeling I was a kind of botched monstrosity, without a hope of ever becoming anything much better — and suffering from that awful inner loneliness of the youngster who feels he's abnormal. It took me years of experience to discover that, at bottom, we're all very much alike—from the genius to the fool—and that, in my basic human feelings, I was no different from other people.

Expert On Myself

So when I was offered the opportunity to write my own thoughts about life, I felt it was no use writing like a disembodied oracle — laying down the law for lesser men. The only life I could really claim to know about was the life of one man. So the only thing to do was to write about him.

Anyway, that's my conscious aim in writing about myself—whatever part subconscious motives of self-importance and "exhibitionism" may play in it. And if I succeed in doing no more than relieving someone of the empty feeling I used to get, that feeling of being alone—of being cut off and "different"—I shall feel I can fully answer the question of that Lancashire chap by saying: "*This* is the use of it."

McGraw sat casually on the table as the sergeant called out names. On the left, beside Mohammed, was Inspector Hawley, then Larkhall Pike, Mr. Lovelace, Mrs. Muller, Hilary, Elfie, Kennedy, Sidonia, Peter Faraway

HANGOVER HOUSE

by **SAX ROHMER**

ILLUSTRATED BY SEABRIGHT

Hilary might fool the local police, but not Scotland Yard. Kennedy knew he had to make her talk—and quickly

WITHIN A FEW MINUTES of arriving at Hangover House, a large, dilapidated country mansion, Storm Kennedy, private detective, found himself taking charge of the guests. Outside, on the terrace, a body lay, a horribly contorted body, in a pool of blood. By the dead man's side was an Oriental dagger.

A few hours earlier, Kennedy had been given an assignment by General Lord Glengale. The general was worried about his daughter, Lady Hilary Bruton, fearing she had become involved with a blackmailer.

Discovering that Hilary and her aunt, "Elfie" Elphinstowe (with whom she lived) had gone to an all-night party at Hangover House—a party to which he himself had been invited — Kennedy drove there through the fog. Most of the guests had left.

It was a curious party—with a curious assortment of guests. There was Mohammed, the Egyptian, flitting mysteriously from room to room; there was Mrs. Muller, strange, beautiful foreigner; Lovelace, her ineffectual escort; Sidonia, a blonde dance band singer; Hilary and Elfie—and of course, the dead man.

Stranger still, the hostess, eccentric Joan Faraway, had left hurriedly in a huff, annoyed by her scatterbrained husband Peter's flirtation with Sidonia.

The police doctor was puzzled about the murder. Stabbed men, he reasoned, weren't contorted as this body was. . . . The local police, too, were puzzled. For none of the guests knew the dead man.

Kennedy thought otherwise. He had surprised Hilary running in from the terrace shortly before the murder was discovered. Also, there had been a woman's footprints in the blood. And something more — a woman's handkerchief, initialled "H," which he had pocketed.

Scotland Yard was summoned. Meanwhile interrogations went on, until one witness was found to be missing—Sidonia. Searching in the garden, the police found her crumpled on the ground.

PART III

Scotland Yard Takes Over

"THERE seems to have been a sort of formal garden down there," Kennedy said. "It's a wilderness, now, and the steps are dangerous. We found her under a tree."

Superintendent Croker nodded shortly. Some ten minutes had elapsed since the discovery of Sidonia; and he was in a bad temper. What with the insolent behaviour of the man, Pike, and those peremptory orders from Scotland Yard, he felt that his official standing had been challenged. He turned to Inspector Hawley.

"Have you sent for the doctor?"

"No, sir." Inspector Hawley shook his head in gloomy resignation. "The lady—Miss Elphinstowe—tells me she had six years with the Red Cross and can manage very well herself."

"But, look here," Peter Faraway broke in. "I mean to say—let me think——"

"One moment, Peter!" Kennedy said. "I want a word with you."

They had been standing in the shadow of the old minstrel gallery. Now, Kennedy took Peter's arm and led him into the courtyard. A constable was posted on the terrace with orders to permit no one out there. As they moved away, Inspector Hawley removed his hat and scratched his close-cropped head.

"That gentleman seems to have taken charge here, sir," he remarked.

"Anyone can take charge as far as I'm concerned," the superintendent snapped. "I make the Yard a gift of this case. They're welcome to it. A man's murdered, a man none of the witnesses has ever seen before, with nothing on him to establish his identity. And now a woman's attacked in the garden. Some homicidal maniac is hiding out there."

"The fog makes it more difficult. There are about eighteen acres of ground

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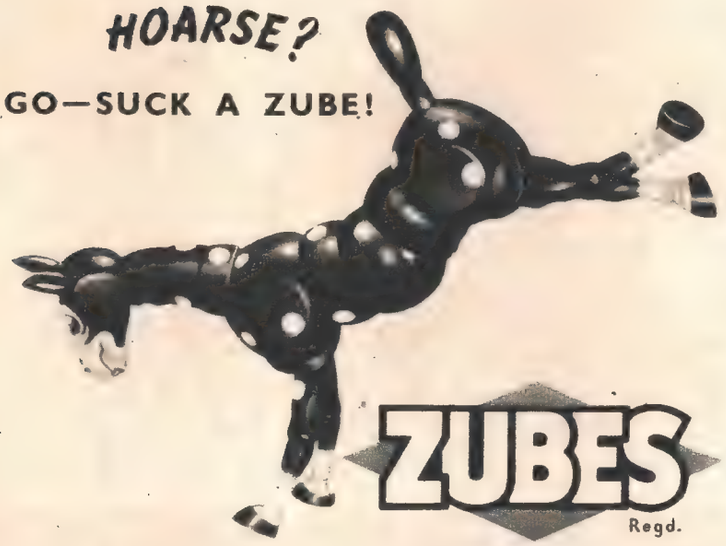

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around this house, mostly wilderness. I have six men on the job, but they've found nobody so far."

"I leave the case in your hands, Inspector Hawley; the fingerprints and the signed statements. My instructions are to proceed no further with the inquiry. Therefore, I'm retiring from it. The photographs will be here shortly. I shall only wait to learn what this woman Sidonia has to tell us, and then go home."

Superintendent Croker was a monument of offended dignity.

But only a few minutes had elapsed when Miss Elphinstowe walked briskly into the echoing, misty room.

"I've pulled her round," she announced. "Anybody got a cigarette?"

The superintendent produced a silver case, and lighted a cigarette for her.

"Can I interview her, madam?"

"I'll tip you off when she's ready."

"What is he- explanation?"

"Well—different from mine. Mine's chiefly booze. She seems to have been down the garden with Peter Faraway and lost him, somehow. Coming back, she blundered on to the body—stepped right in the blood. Bit of a shock. Tottered along to the door of the ladies' room opening on the terrace and then came over faint. She stayed out there for some time, I gather, being sick and what not. Finally, she fainted in earnest—and fell down the steps. Crack on the head. But it hasn't done her much harm."

"Is there any evidence to support this story?" Hawley inquired.

"Well——" Miss Elphinstowe fitted her cigarette into a holder and stuck it in her mouth so that it projected upward—"there's plenty of blood on her shoes."

STORM KENNEDY quietly opened the door of the small, white-panelled room and peeped in. Nobody was there but Sidonia.

The girl, now slightly dishevelled, lay on the sofa, a bandage round her head. She appeared to be asleep. Only one shaded lamp remained alight. There was a smell of eau de cologne. The half-glazed door had been opened. Storm crossed, on tiptoes, and stepped out on to the corner of the terrace.

He had made next to no sound. But Hilary turned and faced him. She held a smouldering cigarette between her fingers. In that dim light, her grey eyes were dove-soft and very lovely.

"Did I alarm you?" He spoke in a low voice.

"No. I was expecting you."

"Why?"

She put the cigarette between her lips and moved to the parapet overlooking the lily pond.

He stood close beside her, for he must speak softly. He found her nearness disturbing; she was intensely attractive.

"When—Elfie—and I, came to look for you earlier tonight, and you ran out of that room, I could see that there was something wrong." He spoke with studied slowness. "When, only a few minutes later, Peter found a dead man outside, I argued like this: There's going to be a police inquiry. Unless the facts are plain, everybody is going to become a suspect. And Hilary Bruton has no alibi."

He glanced aside at his companion. But she was staring straight ahead into the mist.

"Do you see?"

"Supposing——" She spoke quietly—"supposing, foolishly, that if only I could get clear of this ghastly house tonight, I might hope to be free of it all, I took—certain liberties—in answering the superintendent's questions. Now, I'm told, we are being held here for somebody from Scotland Yard."

It was Storm Kennedy's turn to be silent. Hilary had accepted him as an ally, but had given him less than half her confidence. He had hoped for more. It was one thing to make a reticent statement to Superintendent Croker, but the "somebody" from Scotland Yard presented a proposition of a different colour. He had learned from Hawley that Chief Detective Inspector McGraw, of the C.I.D., had been assigned to the case. And Kennedy knew McGraw: a hard, efficient officer, with a deceptively disarming manner.

Hilary rested her hand on his arm and let it remain there.

"Do you think we're in for a bad time?" she whispered.

"Yes—I'm afraid we are. . . ."

RESTFUL slumber was not to be looked for that night. Nevertheless, Storm Kennedy dozed off several times.

He had tried to talk again to Hilary, but she had retired with Miss Elphinstowe to the ladies' room, saying that they hoped to rest there. It was, in fact, a large dressing-room with bath and lavatory accommodation attached, so that, even though Sidonia occupied the only couch, it had advantages not possessed by the panelled hall.

It was a dismissal. Intuition and observation alike told him that the older woman had urged enlisting him as an ally, but that Hilary, for some obscure reason, had declined.

He found an old canvas chair in a shed adjoining the courtyard, carried it into the long hall and placed it near one of the draped windows. At this time he was the only person in the room. He dozed, and awakened to find that Miss Elphinstowe had set up camp on the other side, and was sound asleep.

Out in the courtyard, Mr. Lovelace slumbered musically in his Morris, but none of the other cars was occupied. A constable stood on duty at the gate.

Returning, Kennedy went quietly along the corridor, in which someone had turned the light off. There came a sound of voices from the women's room, which he thought he recognized as those of Hilary and Mrs. Muller. Possibly Sidonia was there, too. Of the Egyptian and Peter Faraway he found no trace. He assumed that Mr. Pike slept in unchallenged solitude in the study.

When he awakened, next, it was a creaking door which disturbed him. He sprang up in a moment, peering into the dark corridor.

A vaguely discernible figure was stealing out of the study!

By the time that he had found his pocket lamp and pressed the button, this figure had disappeared. He realized that he must have been clearly visible against the dim glow of one light left on in the panelled hall.

Miss Elphinstowe never stirred. And daylight was not far away when Kennedy dozed off again.

He was awakened next by the sound of distant voices. He got up and parted the draperies of one of the long windows of the panelled hall.

Points of light moved about the misty acres of Hangover House. Some hurricane lanterns had been pressed into service to reinforce the police lamps. Whatever Scotland Yard may have directed, Inspector Hawley was pursuing his own investigations.

Kennedy could see that the fog was dispersing, for even more distant lights were becoming discernible. A voice behind him said: "I cannot imagine what they are looking for. Can you?"

He turned, to find Mrs. Muller, swathed in mink.

"No," he confessed. "It isn't particularly clear to me."

"Unless," she suggested, "for the murderer?"

Kennedy smiled. It was a rather forced smile.

"If anyone outside were responsible

"Don't tell me Ted Fenshaw's still jealous—!"

for the crime, it's not likely he would be hanging about now."

Mrs. Muller stifled a yawn, and turned it to a faint laugh.

"I am almost asleep on my feet! I explored upstairs a while ago, in the hope of finding somewhere to lie down. But every door is locked."

Storm Kennedy pointed across the room.

On an extemporized divan, composed of several folded rugs, Miss Elphinstowe slept peacefully. She had a scarf tied over her hair, and her shoes were placed neatly beside her on the floor.

"Old campaigner!" Kennedy murmured. "As far as I can make out, there's only one furnished bedroom in the place, and the superintendent had the bed stripped and the body put there!"

"Yes," Mrs. Muller nodded. "He seemed to be very angry with that strange old character. I don't know why." She paused, sighed, and then: "Oh, dear!" she added, "here comes Lovelace again!"

Kennedy followed the direction of her glance, and saw the fair young man peering in from the door which opened on to the vestibule.

"Oh, there you are!" he exclaimed, coming forward. "I have been looking for you."

"Have you?"

Mrs. Muller smiled pathetically at Kennedy.

"Yes—er—I wondered if I could get you anything."

"A cup of coffee would be a godsend."

"Yes. I'll see what I can do."

He wandered off up the corridor, to become lost in shadow.

"No doubt," Mrs. Muller said, "Mr. Lovelace means well, but, frankly, he is rather a nuisance!"

"Bit of a mystery, too. I suppose he must be one of Joan's discoveries."

"He must be. He writes songs. The lucky ones were those who left early. Unfortunately for me, I ran into Joan only yesterday, and she invited me to the party. I happened to find myself at a loose end, and——"

She finished on an eloquent shrug.

"Bad luck!"

"It was, indeed."

A sudden uproar arose from somewhere not far away.

"Be good enough to get out of this room—and stay out! I can offer you neither coffee, tea, nor any other type of beverage. There is a pump on the premises." A door was banged loudly. Apparently Mr. Pike was annoyed.

KENNEDY presently drifted into the courtyard. Dim, eerie light began to displace misty darkness, for dawn was breaking. He could just see Hilary, curled up on the back seat of a Bentley, her bright hair buried in a fleecy cloak. He stood there watching her for a long time. She looked like a grey squirrel.

Miss Elphinstowe woke up shortly after dawn and began to put her shoes on. She was engaged in doing so when a Flying Squad car was driven into the courtyard and a man got out stiffly and stretched his cramped limbs; a tall man, physically unsuited to being cooped in a confined space for long hours. He removed his overcoat and threw it in on to the back seat as a second passenger alighted.

"Case, Sergeant."

The second man, who wore a blue rainproof, took a leather portfolio from the uniformed driver, as Inspector Hawley, who had heard the Yard car approaching, came through the arched opening.

"Chief Inspector McGraw?"

"My name."

The tall man, who had a gaunt and

Continued on page 27

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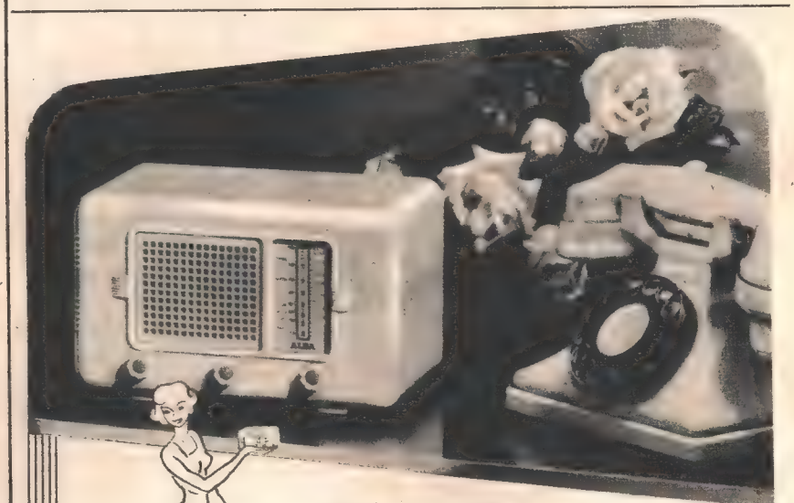

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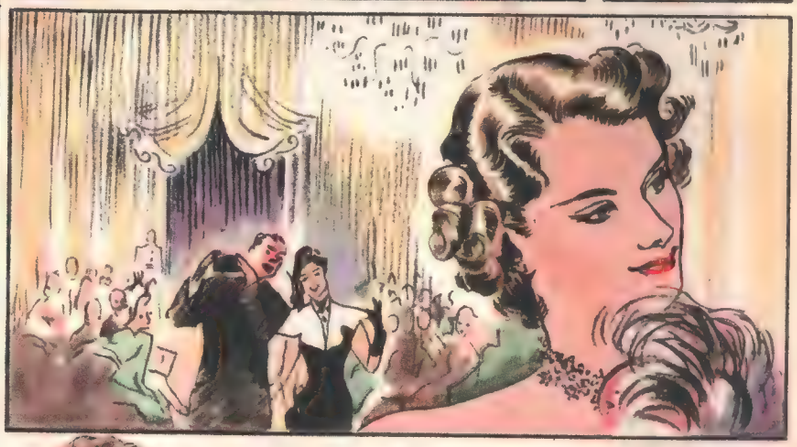

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HANGOVER HOUSE

Continued from page 25

aquiline, clean-shaven face, and tired-looking fawn-like eyes under drooping lids, chewed as he spoke. His words were few, and tired, like his eyes.

"Inspector Hawley of Lychgate."

McGraw extended his hand. "Called up, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Murder?"

"A clear case, Chief Inspector."

"Site roped off?"

"Every area believed to bear on the crime is isolated. The body of the dead man is in the house. Fingerprints of all present were taken after they had viewed the body and the weapon used. Some new evidence has come to hand——"

"Own impressions first. This is Detective Sergeant Sample. Begin with scene of murder. . . ."

Three quarters of an hour elapsed before Chief Inspector McGraw and Sergeant Sample entered Hangover House. When they passed through the long hall, McGraw merely glanced at that grey company wearing creased evening clothes. Inspector Hawley led the way to the relic-crowded study, rapped on the door and entered.

Storm Kennedy stood by an open french window, and half-light seeped in. A desk lamp was switched on and there was a light in the inglenook. The shelves, with their dead gods and fusty volumes, lay in haunted shadow. No one else was in the room.

McGraw pulled up on the threshold, as Kennedy turned.

"Hallo!" he said. "*You* here?"

"Good morning, Chief Inspector. Glad to see you again, Sergeant Sample."

McGraw chewed thoughtfully. Hawley watched.

"This is homicide, not larceny. Who're you covering?"

Kennedy smiled, and came forward. He had planned to have as few witnesses as possible to his meeting with the C.I.D. men. He offered a slip of cardboard to McGraw.

"I received this a week ago. Socially, I'm a gentleman at large. Don't give me away. I'm just one of the guests."

Chief Inspector McGraw glanced at Joan Faraway's invitation, and then returned it.

"Oh," he said, "is that so?"

"I may add that if I can help in any way, I am entirely at your service."

"I'll bear it in mind." McGraw spoke over his shoulder to Hawley. "Where's the body?"

CHIEF INSPECTOR MCGRAW seated himself casually on the desk in Larkhall Pike's study, gazing around. Now, only Peter Faraway and Mohammed were absent. His open portfolio lay before him. Detective Sergeant Sample stood behind his chair. McGraw glanced at a number of papers neatly pinned together.

"I regret," he said drowsily, "inconvenience to those present, particularly the ladies. When the case was placed in my hands I ordered parties then on the premises to be held until I arrived. Fog-bound on the way. Sorry. You all know the serious nature of the case. Murder. I have examined the scene of the discovery—dead man—photographs—fingerprints. Have not yet established identity of victim. Here's a list of names of those present. Call out, Sergeant."

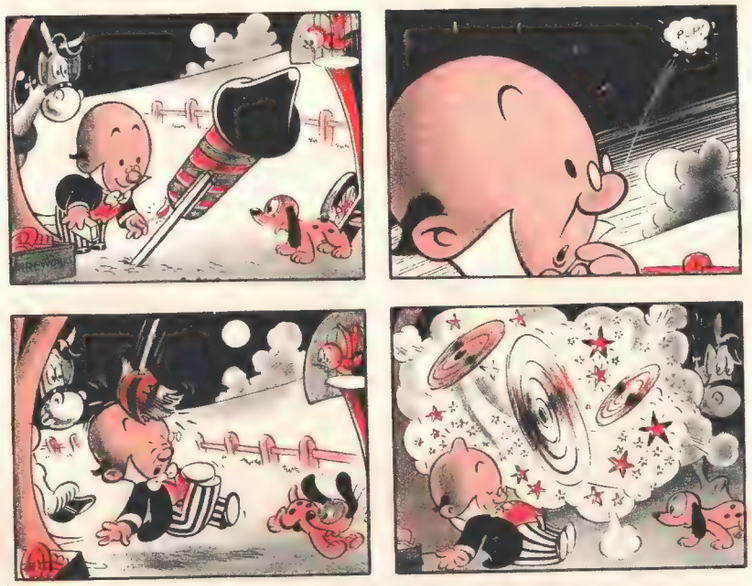
He detached a page from the pinned papers and handed it to Sample.

"Yes, sir."

"Glad if you will answer when you hear your names."

Sergeant Sample, who had not removed his raincoat, looked more like a sailor than a policeman. He had a rugged, weatherbeaten face, a resigned expression, and a mode of speech that was

MR. DIMPLE *by David Hand*



so completely resigned that it had no expression at all.

"Mr. Storm Kennedy."

"Here, Sergeant."

"Mohammed——" He paused, peered down at the notes—"Mohammed Ibin—La——"

"I am Mohammed Ibn Lahûn," said the Egyptian, who had just walked silently in.

Sergeant Sample stared suspiciously.

"Mr. Allen Lovelace."

"Er—yes."

Mr. Lovelace looked furtively around, tried to catch the glance of Mrs. Muller, and failed, then went out. He left the door partly open.

"Honourable Peter Faraway."

There was no reply.

"Honourable Peter Faraway!"

Came a sound of hurried footsteps, and Peter appeared. He wore dress trousers and a silk vest and was mopping his wet hair with a handkerchief.

"I say—" he glanced vaguely about him—"did I seem to hear my name? It's Faraway."

"Where have you been, sir?" Sergeant Sample asked, his voice conveying that he didn't care a hoot where he'd been.

"I've been asleep."

"Understood there were no beds," McGraw muttered.

"Oh, I wasn't in a bed. I was in a bath. And the beastly tap leaks."

"Go ahead, Sergeant."

"Miss Elphinstowe."

"I am Amelia Elphinstowe," came a crisp response.

"Mrs. Muller."

"Yes."

"Miss Julia Sidney, professionally known as Sidonia."

"I'm here."

Sidonia, lolling in a chair, nodded and smiled, then resumed a whispered conversation with Peter, who had seated himself on an arm of her chair.

"Miss Mary Bruton."

STORM KENNEDY clenched his teeth, and stared hard at Hilary—then at Miss Elphinstowe. Both avoided his glance. Hilary, flashing a swift look in Peter's direction, answered steadily:

"Here."

"Mr. Larkhall Pike."

From the inglenook, Mr. Pike, arrayed in pyjamas and old dressing-gown, looked up.

"Yes."

In a momentary lull Inspector Hawley came in. He walked across to the desk.

"I have sent for Dr. Smithy, Chief Inspector. The Post Office say they can't restore phone service until the subscriber has complied with demands."

McGraw raised his lids, partially.

"Told 'em *I'm* here? Who does this house belong to?"

"Mr. Pike."

Larkhall Pike glanced up from the inglenook.

"Not at all," said Mr. Pike.

McGraw slowly turned in his direction.

"Telephone account not settled?"

"Quite. It isn't."

"If this is not your house, whose house is it?"

"My brother, Benedict's."

"Can I interview your brother Benedict?"

"I presume so."

"Where?"

"Australia."

But no one laughed except Peter Faraway, who had not yet found out what day it was. Mr. Pike went on reading and McGraw stood up, walked around the desk and then leaned back against it.

"Inspector Hawley, I want this line working. Go and tell 'em so."

Inspector Hawley departed. McGraw surveyed all present, one by one.

"In the first place, now that you have had time for reflection, does anyone here know the name of the murdered man?"

Mr. Lovelace entered, carrying with care a tumbler of water. He conveyed it to Mrs. Muller, who leaned against a bookcase. She took it, forced a grateful smile, and put it down. There was silence.

"Nobody? Is that so?"

Storm Kennedy watched Hilary, who had joined Miss Elphinstowe. She had her back turned to him. McGraw proceeded:

"Now—after the murder had taken place, who first entered this room?"

Kennedy had been expecting the question. His glance searched the company. Hilary didn't turn, and he couldn't see Elfie's face. Mohammed's velvet eyes met his glance disinterestedly.

Peter Faraway was combing his hair with a comb borrowed from Sidonia—who looked frightened. Mrs. Muller was smiling at Mr. Lovelace—and Mr. Pike was reading.

"*I* did," Kennedy replied.

There was something in the tone of his voice, quiet though it was, that struck an instant, vibrant chord. All sensed tension. Even Mr. Pike looked up.

"So you said." McGraw drawled, and turned his veiled regard in Kennedy's direction. He continued to chew. "Just thought maybe someone else might have been ahead of you. People are so forgetful."

"Elfie," Hilary whispered. "We must slip away, somewhere, somehow, and think! This man frightens me."

McGraw leaned farther back, but his half-closed eyes continued to study the faces of those in the room.

"All wait outside. Needn't stay indoors. Avoid roped-off spaces. Going to try a little experiment. As I hear no one has had anything to eat, shall do my best to arrange for refreshments."

Elfie and Hilary left first, hurrying out into the corridor. Mr. Lovelace conducted Mrs. Muller on to the terrace. It faced west, and already the shadow of the house lay over neglected lawns, for the sun was rising. Sidonia took Peter's arm and led him through the doorway. Mohammed approached the Chief Inspector, crossed his hands on his breast, and bowed.

"Sir, as this matter concerns me not at all, as I have no evidence to offer, is it not proper that I depart about my affairs?"

"It isn't," said McGraw. "Wait outside."

Mohammed bowed again and retired silently. Storm Kennedy walked to the door, and then turned.

"My offer holds good, Inspector McGraw."

"Haven't forgotten it."

Kennedy went out. The thing was taking even worse shape than he had anticipated. Every move she made increased the difficulty of screening Hilary. He was so angry that he knew he must avoid her until he had himself well in hand again.

McGraw turned to the sergeant. "Let's go upstairs again."

HE led the way up the short stair, opened a massive door and entered a room not much larger than a monk's cell, sparsely furnished as a bedchamber. Leaded windows overlooked neglected gardens, for the room was built out on an arch which spanned the terrace.

A form covered with a sheet lay on the bed, and on a small table beside it were a few exhibits—articles found in the murdered man's possession. A wrist watch; silver cigarette case; lighter; a leather wallet which contained twenty-odd pounds, but nothing else; a bunch of keys, and a gold object resembling a fountain-pen, the top attached to the base by a thin metal chain.

McGraw picked it up and fumbled with it for a while; then shook his head and replaced it on the table.

"Got us all whacked, sir," said Sample. "Inspector Hawley couldn't unscrew it, either. Some sort of trick fastener."

McGraw merely chewed, and switched his attention to a number of garments set out on two chairs. Presently:

"Shirt was bought in Paris," he muttered. "Laundry marks aren't English. Suit is a reach-me-down, but good quality. Label says 'Simon Artz,' but no address. Ever hear of a tailor of that name?"

"No, sir."

"Lightweight material; probably tropical wear. Looks as though he'd lived in a hot climate."

Finally, McGraw turned to a deep window-ledge and considered what lay there.

On a sheet of white paper was the blue-bladed, silver-hilted dagger, the hilt finely chased and inlaid with a design in amethysts. It had yielded no identifiable fingerprints. A shagreen sheath, evidently of great age, lay beside it. This had been discovered by

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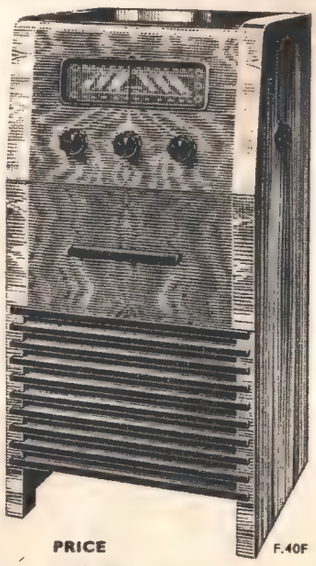

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HANGOVER HOUSE

Continued from previous page

Inspector Hawley at some distance below the terrace.

But there was one other exhibit—found by the same patient searcher not far from the sheath. It was an ancient Egyptian necklace representing a winged disc, fashioned in delicate enamel on gold.

And the only fingerprints upon the shagreen and the necklace were those of the dead man!

McGraw pushed the leaded panes open and looked out. Mrs. Muller and Mr. Lovelace were walking slowly along the terrace; fantastic in their dress clothes. No one else was in sight. A choir of birds saluted the rising sun. . . .

STORM KENNEDY made a complete circuit of the rambling building. Part of it was of great age, but there were comparatively recent additions. Some of the walls he saw smothered in untended ivy. Windows were broken. The outbuildings, comprising a dairy, a huge stable and coach-house, storerooms, a steward's cottage, stood practically in ruins. The gatehouse looked as though no one had inhabited it for several generations.

He came to a smaller courtyard, on the east side, surrounded by more outbuildings. A provocative smell drew his attention to an open window. He looked in, and saw a vast kitchen, dimly lighted. He saw, also, at a small stove, Mr. Larkhall Pike brewing coffee.

"Good morning!" he called, cheerily.

Mr. Pike turned, his pince-nez swinging, pendulum fashion, over his faded dressing-gown.

"I don't know you, sir—and I laboured under the delusion that this part of the house, at least, might be regarded as private."

"May I introduce myself? Storm Kennedy is the name. I don't want to intrude, and I don't want any coffee. But I think you have had rather a shabby deal, and I merely looked in to say so."

"My thanks, Mr. Kennedy."

Mr. Pike turned again to his coffee making. But Kennedy stayed—for he had found the man he was looking for.

"I'm here by accident, myself. Wouldn't come to such a jamboree for choice, and I'm dead sick of being bullied by these blasted policemen——"

"In that, sir, I agree with you."

"Had no sleep. Don't know if you had?"

Mr. Pike's coffee was ready. He turned.

"I am amazed, sir, to learn that there is a sane man present—and one who knows how to behave himself. My I offer you a cup of coffee?"

"Well—are you sure there's enough?"

"Quite sure. Come in and sit down, Mr. Kennedy."

They sat on two unpainted chairs, and presently Mr. Pike unbent. He declined a cigarette.

"You asked me if I slept? How can a man be expected to sleep, sir, when he has been turned out of his bed to make way for a corpse? I tried to compose myself in the study. But on two separate occasions I was aroused by someone stealing into the room."

Storm Kennedy grew keenly alert. But he gave no sign.

"Looking for somewhere to sleep, no doubt?"

"Stuff and nonsense, sir! Rot, sir! I had, naturally, extinguished the lights, and therefore was unable to see clearly. So that on both occasions the intruder escaped before I could reach the switch. But her objective——"

"*Her* objective?"

"I said '*her* objective'—the prowler was, unmistakably, a woman—seemed to be the stair leading to my bedroom."

"In which the dead man lay?"

"Unless he is a vampire, an unclean nocturnal, in which, as you say, yes, the dead man lay. My visitor was wrapped in a cloak or cape. So much I learned in one glimpse I had of her retreating to the corridor from which she had entered."

Storm Kennedy knew that his pulse had quickened, but when he spoke there was no excitement in his voice.

"H'm. Most extraordinary incident, Mr. Pike."

"Two incidents, Mr. Kennedy. Both equally extraordinary."

"Have you any idea of the colour or texture of the cloak this woman wore?"

"No idea whatever. She appeared as a dim silhouette."

"You didn't attempt to follow her."

"I did not."

"Nor lock the door?"

"The lock is broken."

Storm Kennedy lighted another cigarette.

He recognized the fact that he stood on dangerous ground. This remarkable man was liable to go up in the air on the slightest provocation. But he determined to risk it.

"You have travelled extensively in the East, sir, I gather?"

"Extensively, sir. I formerly held His Majesty's commission, Indian Army. I am entitled to describe myself as Major; but the liberties the Government has taken with pensioned officers so disgusted me that I laid aside my rank with my equally useless medals. After my retirement, I joined several expeditions—excavating in Egypt, Syria, and so on. Expensive hobby. Lost all my money since those days."

Kennedy inhaled deeply.

"The weapon employed in this mysterious affair," he ventured, "is of a type with which you may be familiar?"

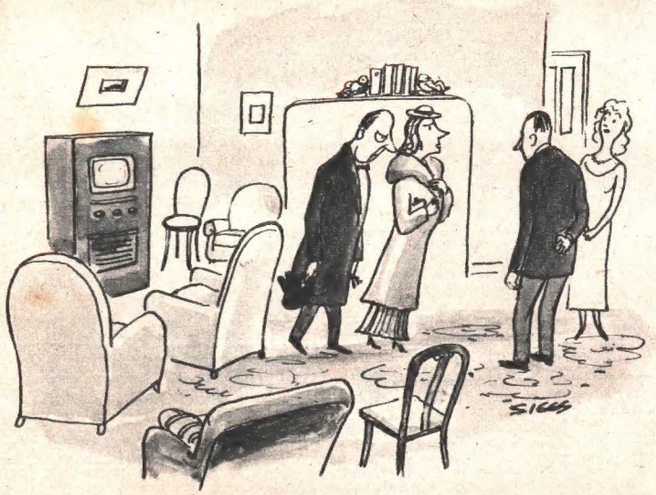
"Quite familiar, even out there in lamplight. Damascus blade. Best

THIS WEEK'S COVER

DOUGLAS L. MAYS'S cover this week is an oil painting in contrast to his popular water colours depicting the adventures of the Cover Kids. Although many illustrators use water colours almost exclusively, about half of the Mays paintings which have appeared in John Bull have been in oils.

This picture, based on a scene he watched in a friend's house, set Mays thinking of how bathtime has changed since his young days. Then, he says, the idea was to get it over as quickly as possible; now children seem to love it and the screaming only starts when the plug is pulled out.

Does anyone, he wonders, know why?



"Frankly, we're a little surprised at you putting on that sort of thing"

period. Hilt of poor Baghdad workmanship. Decadent. Late Abbasid. Harêm toy. Not a bad piece—though I have seen better."

"Did Superintendent Croker invite your opinion, Major?"

"Forget my majority, sir, unless you wish to be offensive. Superintendent Croker is a damned outsider! Ex-non-commissioned officer—Sappers. Risen by impudence and petticoat influence to his present job in the police."

Kennedy stood up. He sensed Major Larkhall Pike's rising temperature—and he had learned much.

"It has been a pleasure to chat with you, sir. A very unsavoury business. You have my sincere sympathy. . . ."

But Kennedy reserved a quota of sympathy for himself.

His inquiries had been prompted by that curious occurrence which he had noted during the night.

Now, according to Mr. Pike, the figure he had seen was that of a woman.

And this woman could only have been one of four!

He walked on down a gravel path which led to a tumbledown rustic summer-house; and then he saw Hilary, walking towards him.

She wore the fleecy wrap, and a morning breeze played with her hair. She was smiling.

"Good morning, fellow prisoner!"

"Good morning, Hilary. Did you sleep well?"

"Don't be too wildly absurd! How could anybody hope to sleep well cramped up on the seat of a car?"

Kennedy loved those smiling lips. But Hilary's eyes were not smiling, now.

"No, hardly. Well—this is at least a breathing space before we face the next ordeal."

Hilary glanced down at a jungle of wild briar which at some time had been part of a rose garden.

"I dread it," she said simply.

"So do I."

Hilary was silent for a while, picking at a stone embedded in the gravel, with the toe of her evening shoe.

"I'm afraid," she confessed. "I have acted like an incredible fool."

"You have! I don't know what to do about you."

Her eyes blazed for a moment, but Kennedy met their anger with a quiet stare, and Hilary dropped her lashes.

"I know I *am* a fool," she said; "but I hate to be treated like one!"

"Listen, my dear. I quite understand that you gave Croker your name last night as Mary Bruton, because——"

"It *is* my name. I was christened Hilary Felice Mary."

"Very likely. But you hoped it would enable you to pass unnoticed. You thought, then, that you might be dismissed from the case and nobody be any the wiser. Isn't that true?"

"Yes."

"But Elfie didn't know until your name was called out by Sergeant Sample?"

"No. I hadn't told her."

"Of course, I realize that having done it, you had to stick to it. But, as things have turned out, well—it makes matters look so much worse. You see, unfortunately this was only one of many indiscretions."

Hilary didn't meet his eyes, but some of her colour faded.

"You seem to know almost too much about me."

"Too little, Hilary. If I knew everything, I should know what to do. Just moving in the dark, I have done what I could. What I don't understand is why you said you had never seen the murdered man before, when, in fact, you knew him quite well."

It was a body blow, delivered quite deliberately.

Hilary flushed hotly—and then grew alarmingly pale. Her grey eyes, when she raised them to him, were pleading for mercy.

"How do you know?" she whispered.

"How I know doesn't matter. What matters is that McGraw is certain to find out—and draw an inevitable conclusion. Hilary! For God's sake, help me!—or how can I hope to help you?"

Kennedy had his arm about her. He had not intended it to be there. The thing happened automatically, inevitably.

Hilary rested her bowed fair head on his shoulder. But Kennedy knew there was something else he had to do. And it would have to be done now.

From his pocket he took out an old envelope—one he had found there; it was addressed to himself. And from the envelope he extracted a square of stained, embroidered cambric. In one corner the initials H.B. had been worked in silk.

"This handkerchief lay beside the dead man, Hilary. I committed a serious felony in removing it—it's yours, isn't it?"

To be continued next week

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"WHAT an indescribable thrill! I knew it could come to *other* people, but surely, I thought, not to *me*. It all seemed unreal, but receiving congratulations from relatives and friends was a joy indeed." In those words reader A. G. Bowles described the arrival of the Friday Telegram from JOHN BULL at his home, 53 Molesey Park Road, West Molesey. It brought him congratulations on winning a £750 *Bullets* cheque and celebration weekend in our 1,700th competition.

No, it's not Wilfred Pickles—it's reader A. G. Bowles. He "had a go" and won £750!

Another batch of this year's

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Enter this week's best effort and this contest's Friday Telegram will bring you the thrill of hearing that you've won a £500 fortune *and* a fine turkey for Christmas.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated Dec. 3 and in JOHN BULL dated Dec. 10, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

ADD 2, 3 or 4 WORDS to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* on right. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

In This World	Endless
Our Medicine	Roused The Neighbours
John And Sam	Rushed Into
Round Recovery Corner	Dark Horse
Parenthood	Cold And Clammy
Price We Pay	Little Extra Something
Man Who's Wanted	**Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions**
To Survive	
Truth Will Out, So	.....For The Nation
More Like It	Put In The.....
With A Bit Of Imagination	Helps Her To.....
Bitterly Disappointed	"I Want My.....!"
Father's Share	..... Fortune
Ought To Be Broadcast	As Long As He's.....

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "COMBINED," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY "Bullets" 1,706 (or Xword 658) "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

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THIS WAY TO WIN

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues on right. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 658**

1. Such babies are commonly sought in vain
2. A little this when needed may save a lot of trouble later
4. Young kiddies may be frightened by certain kind of
6. When off the beaten track, it's an advantage to have this with you
8. Some people have the idea professional boxer hardly ever feels this
11. Dogs can be trained to follow these
12. Has been known to help police in their search
13. It's amazing how racketeer dealing with big this gets away with it

Down Clues

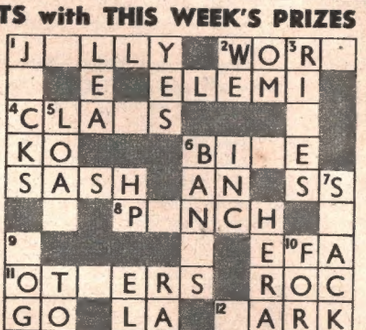
1. Many these find work on British ships
3. Hiker usually welcomes them
5. There are times when it's almost impossible to get one
6. Announcements of these are noted with special interest
7. A woman is silly who will sometimes keep giving her troublesome child this, to keep it quiet
9. Keeping them may call for special knowledge
10. Traffic can go either way where there's a this

MORE XMAS FEASTS with THIS WEEK'S PRIZES

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps, covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated November 26.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.



CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
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No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

I enclose P.O. value.....

No. .....

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658 Closing Postmark MON., NOV. 14

THE TWO WINSTON CHURCHILLS

Continued from page 9

people attributed his tactics to Lord Beaverbrook's influence; and others to his own bad judgment.

I could not help recalling the lines of H. G. Wells: "There are times when the evil spirit comes upon him and when I think of him as a very intractable, a very mischievous, dangerous little boy, a knee-worthy little boy. Only by thinking of him in that way can I go on liking him."

Two days before polling day I heard Churchill address an enormous gathering at the Walthamstow Stadium on the outskirts of London, and was amazed at the amount of opposition and heckling he received. He was interrupted so often he could scarcely get through his speech.

When he had finished, his daughter Sarah invited me to a private room to have beer and sandwiches with them before he went on to his next engagement.

As a war correspondent for the past eight years I had seen a number of countries invaded and overrun by the enemy, and when Churchill saw me he exclaimed: "What a bad omen! For the first time I have my doubts about this election. *You* only appear when the established régime is crashing to the ground!"

Hid His Bitterness

Defeat burned deep into Churchill's soul. He felt that he had been badly used by an ungrateful population, but he concealed his bitterness and took care not to allow vindictiveness to creep into his speeches. And he still retained his sense of humour.

When a friend suggested that he make a tour of England so that the thousands of his own countrymen who had never seen him could have a chance to honour him, he growled: "I refuse to be exhibited like a prize bull whose chief attraction is its past prowess."

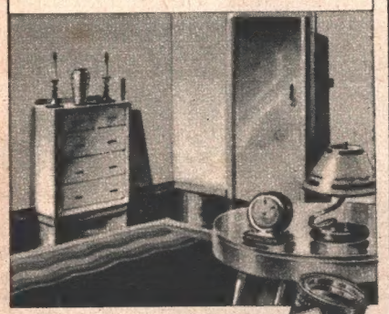
He faced the new House of Commons with the pride and courage for which he is famous, and on the opening day of Parliament hundreds of members cheered him, singing: "For he's a jolly good fellow." He was extremely courteous to the new Prime Minister, but every now and then he could not resist a private joke.

When, after the election, Attlee went to Washington and in his absence there were altercations between his Ministers, Winston is said to have remarked: "When the mouse is away, the cats will play."

And yet his peculiarly disarming quality of forgive and forget was expressed when he had bronze plaques made, adorned with the oak and the acorn, and sent them to all those who had served in his wartime Government.

Socialists whom he had branded as future Gestapo leaders were surprised to receive these souvenirs with their names inscribed and bearing the words: "Salute the greatest of all Coalitions. 1940-45."

Lacquer your home a lovely colour



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"that's a 'school' cough..."

says Mum

". . . . . and if we leave it till you've done your homework it'll stay for weeks." *Don't let that cough settle.* With Kilkof in the cupboard you're all ready to deal with those first ominous little warning-coughs. *Your chemist and grocer sell Kilkof—why not get a 1/6d. bottle today?*

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CPW/K5

Attractive and energetic?

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